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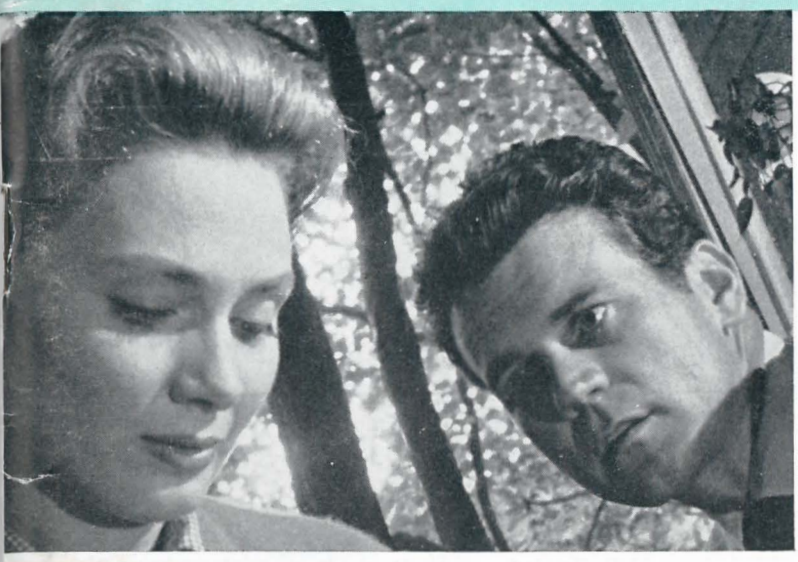

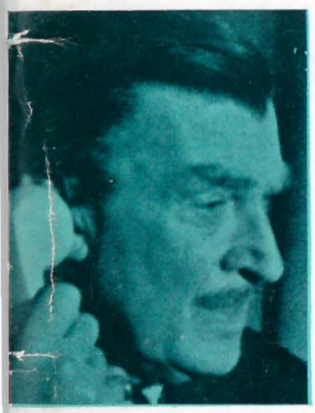

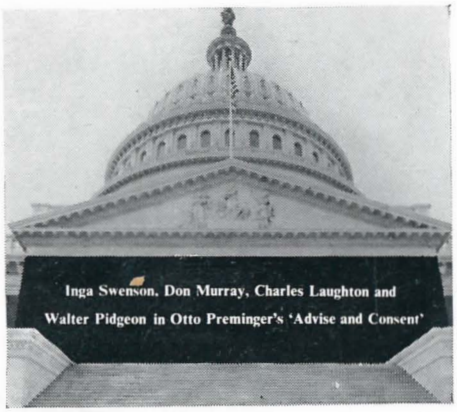

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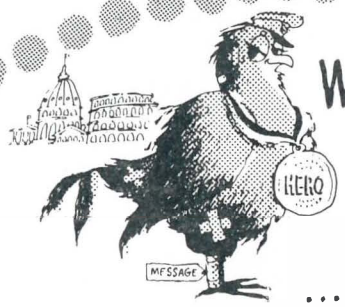

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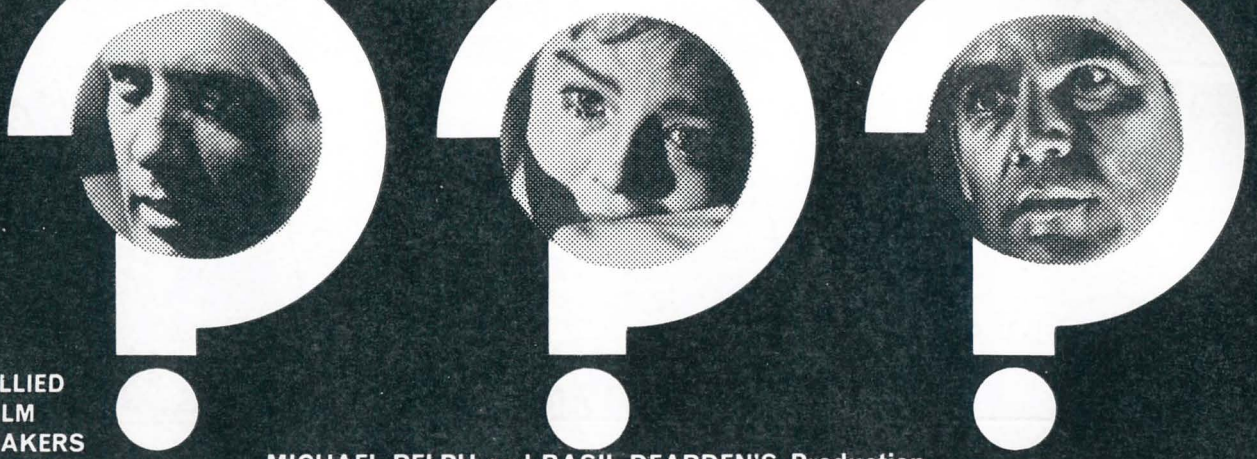

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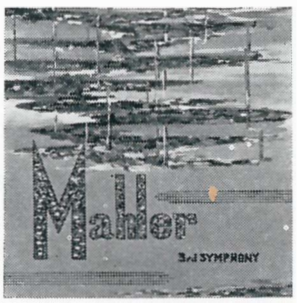

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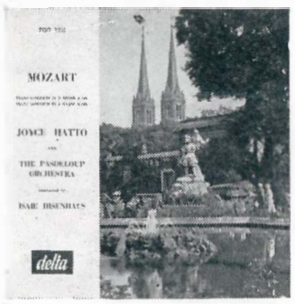

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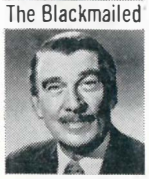
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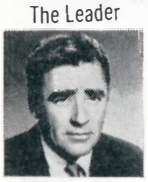
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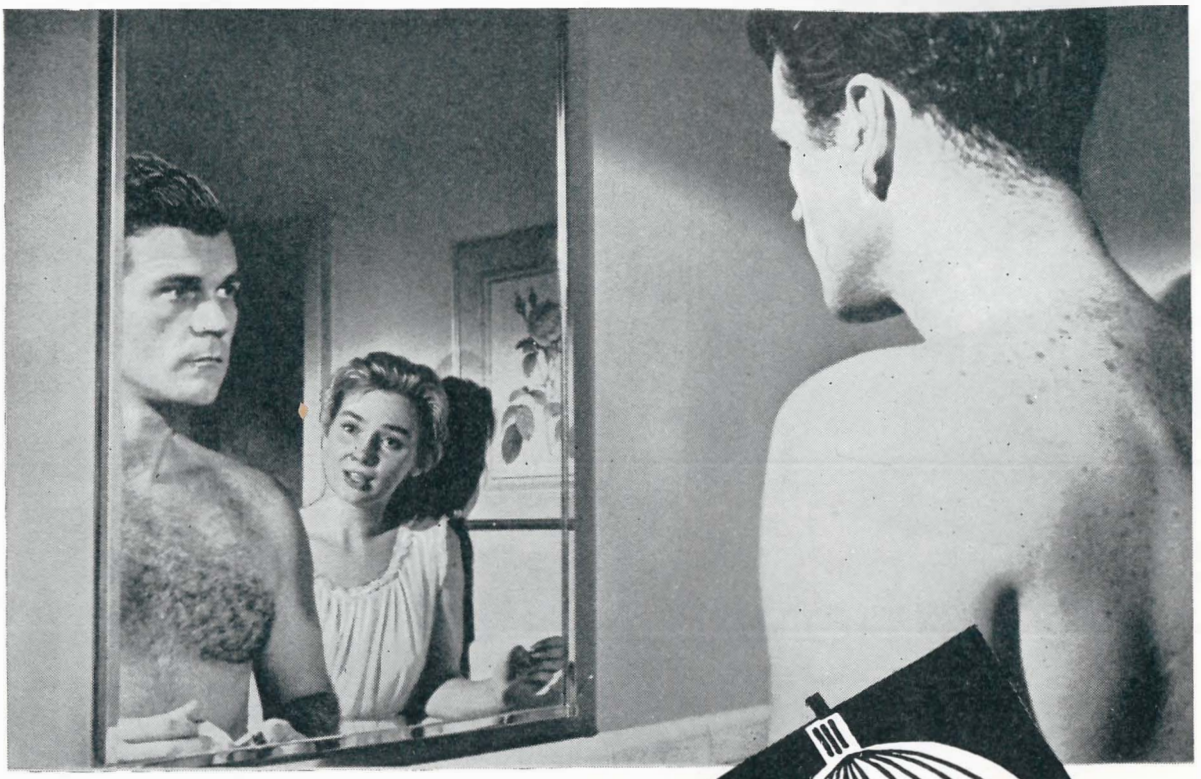

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Richard Burton

July 9, 1962 marked the end of Cleopatra's royal progress for, after a couple of hours final work, the most expensive, most publicised film in the history of the cinema finally moved out of the Cinecitta sound stages occupied since September 25 of the previous year. Not, perhaps, a date to burn into the public consciousness as completely as 1066 and all that but, for many people (particularly Fox shareholders) a moment of destiny. Quite a few reputations have been fanged by the serpent of old Cinecitta and a lot depends on the reactions after February 1963 when *Cleopatra* has its premiere—always barring such unlikely accidents as a fire in the laboratory.

Cleopatra's Anthony (Shakespearian style) scales a towering peak of passion so devastating few actors have found true stature in the ruinous glory of the role; *Cleopatra's* Anthony (Mankiewicz style) scales down these demands, no doubt, but still throws a burden on the actor. This Anthony must find a scale of acting large enough to match a stereocacaphonic spectacular, a magnitude of presence. Richard Burton is the introverted actor, Hamlet rather than Anthony, but just as he once conquered the early, unfamiliar, ratios of Cinemascope so now, with the aid of a sympathetic mentor (who made the best, least gimmicky, Shakespearian film) he may well conquer yet again.

Burton (born Richard Jenkins in South Wales on 10th November, 1925) is an actor who has yet to achieve his full potential either on stage or screen. Since his debut in Emlyn Williams' play *The Druid's Rest* at the age of 16 Burton has had greater opportunities than any of his contemporaries. By the time he was 30 he had ranged more widely through the Shakespearian canon than any other actor of comparable quality with the exception of Scofield. He has played both Iago and The Moor (a relatively rare double, even if neither performance was completely satisfactory), both Prince Hal and Henry V, both Ferdinand and Caliban in *The Tempest*, and in two differing title-roles (*Coriolanus* and the non-Shakespearian *Montserrat*) has almost touched an image of true greatness.

The cinema, far from enlarging Burton's talent, has been a crippling influence; the history of his Hollywood years is one of diminishing success and narrowing range. To grow in stature an actor needs the *largesse* of great roles, and they weren't present in *Seawife*, *The Bramble Bush* or *Ice Palace*. The earlier promise of *My Cousin Rachel* flattened out into a frozen-faced taciturnity. The frigid image of the later Burton is hardly recognizable as the bright young talent who had brought such glowing simplicity to *The Boy With A Cart* and *The Lady's Not for Burning*, the Christopher Fry plays.

Perhaps, though, these last few years have been a period of quiet consolidation, that breathing space most actors seem to need before that final expansion into greatness. In December 1960 Burton blazed back onto the Broadway stage in *Camelot*. Years before he had made a rather shamefaced use of the 'hwyl', that chanting Welsh plain-song, in his Hamlet soliloquies (a first night experiment rather quickly dropped) but now his robust chanting of the musical numbers—particularly his duet, 'What do Simple Folks Do'—turn *Camelot* into something of a return to glory.

Burton left King Arthur's Court for dalliance with Egypt's Queen, a historic meeting which needs a Plutarch to chronicle it with any adequacy. He makes an appearance in Zanuck's *The Longest Day*. Aud now . . . what? The great roles in the dramatic repertoire demand talent plus experience, that is why most great actors are breaching their forties before they're granted the final accolade. Burton is almost 37.

films and filming

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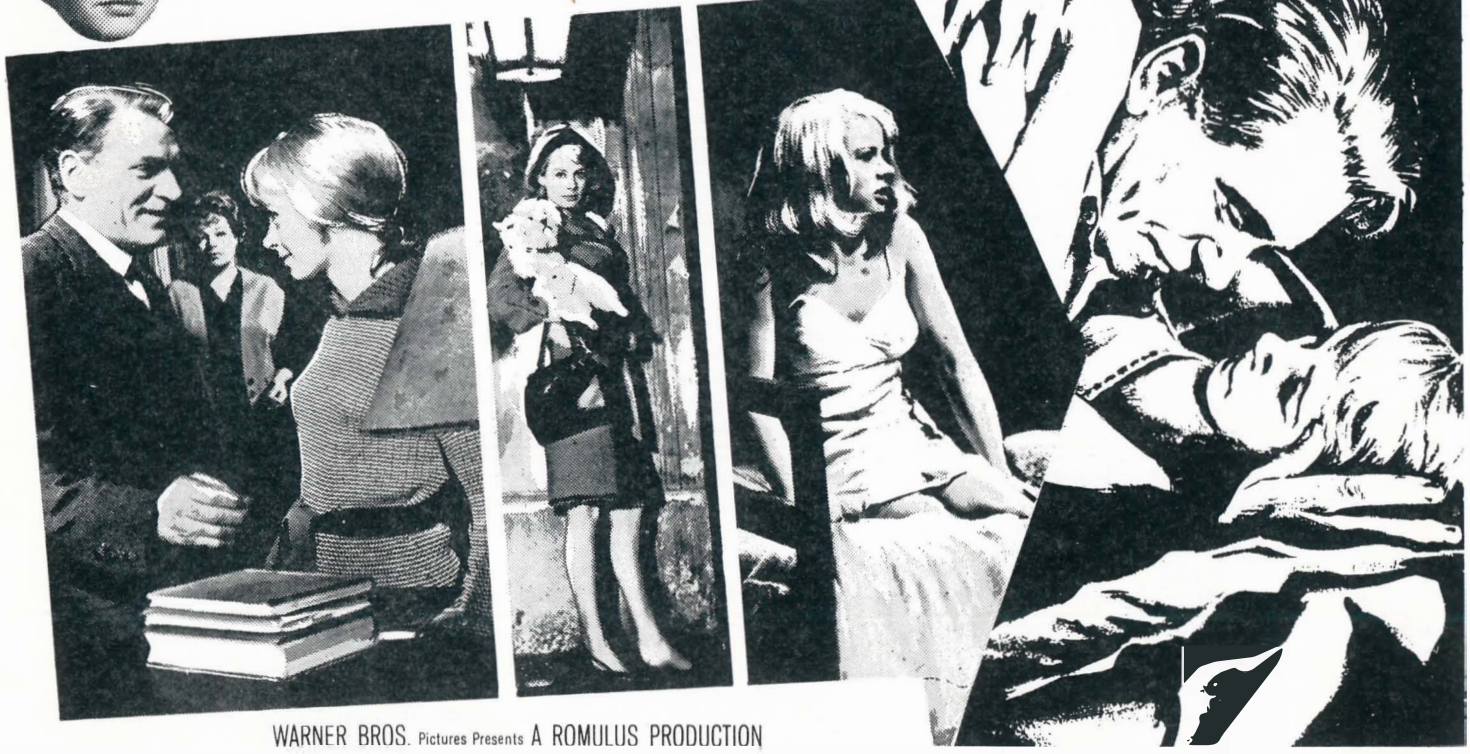

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The mountains round Palermo have never looked so close as they do in this palpitating heat; there is something menacing about those great rocks thrusting sheer out of the plain, fit places for the ageless or the primeval, noon-day demons, centaurs, and the bandit Giuliano. Here in Sicily heat is like a ravening beast, another image to add to Lampedusa's many-sided Leopard. In the sun it crouches for a pounce, in the shade it attacks the innards and liquidates the will. Beneath it Palermo lies aquiver with suspense from the first moments after dawn. On main streets, near impenetrable slums, taut faces jostle and tension seems at breaking point. But down at the end of one street, clearly visible from the centre of town, lies a symbol of coolness and escape, a white ship at anchor ready to sail for the Isles of the Hesperides with those who can afford the fare.

This heat emphasises two sides of the Sicilian character; one a yearning for the ineffable, death, or that mysterious 'otherness' which impregnates Lampedusa's book; the other so diffused in the western part of the island that there is even a local name for it, *la tensione siciliana*. The 'troupe' of *The Leopard* wandering round Palermo in search of pleasure in off moments are conspicuous by their different faces and something in their bearing that emphasises detachment.

Filming is of its very nature full of paradoxes; a particularly odd one here is that one of the members of the company most sensitive and sympathetic to Sicilian life and manners is an American, Burt Lancaster himself, the very actor whose choice for the key part of the Prince of Salina caused raised eyebrows. He has absorbed local atmosphere, visited the city's monuments, read background books on the island (at the moment he is investigating Dennis Mack Smith's views on Garibaldi and the Sicilian peasantry in 1860). His knowledge of the text of *The Leopard* is extra-ordinary; he has met and talked with almost everyone connected with the book. The actor's chameleon gift of sympathy, of entering an alien life and making it his own, has combined with a long standing and very personal interest in the arts quite apart from acting. He has lived *The Leopard*, until as filming develops he is coming to represent more and more the spirit of the book, perhaps more aware than anyone on the set apart from the director how difficult it is to put a work of such verbal artistry into visual terms, and more determined to fill his dialogue with Lampedusa's poetic meaning. Mutual respect grows between himself and Italy's most meticulous and dynamic director, theatrical wizard Luchino Visconti, whose view of the script is more sociological. Their heads are often to be seen together on the set animatedly discussing some point in the script. Their collaboration augurs well for the serious quality of a film in which a member of the new world has so fruitfully been brought in to redress the balance of the old.

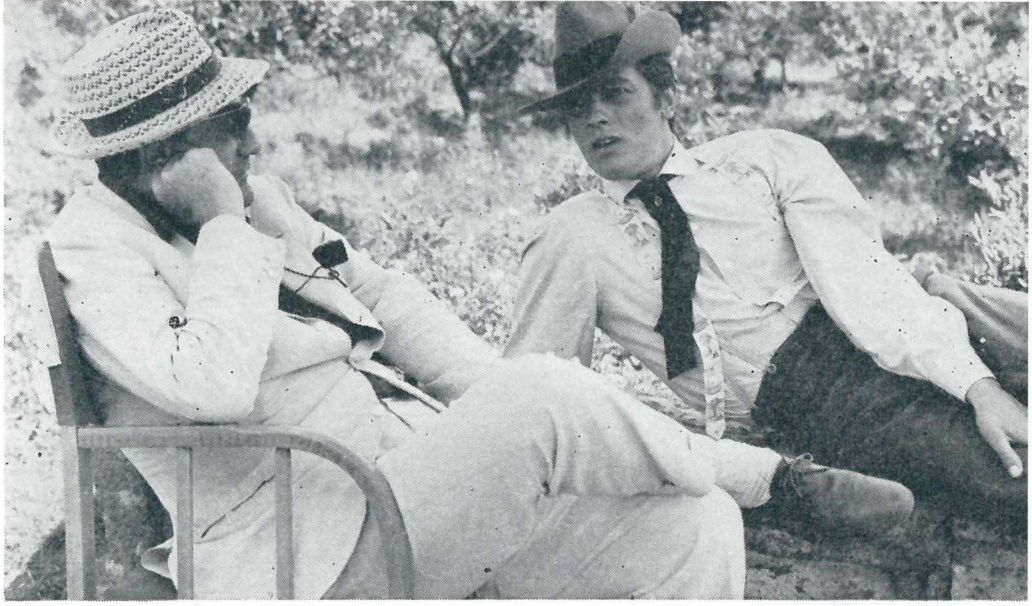
The cinema has a way of holding a distorting mirror up to nature, and producing an image that is larger than life. These 175 aliens, Italians, French, with a smattering of British and Americans and a German mistress or governess attached, move through the Sicilian scene which they are here to 'capture' with an uncanny resemblance to an invading force. The flag of the producing company, Titanus, floats from technical vehicles, caravans and private transport of exotic and expensive design; and the route to a location in the remote interior such as Ciminna where the outdoor scenes of Donnafugata are being filmed, is scattered with coloured arrows bearing the same potent and faintly pixie syllables. They might be road signs of some armoured division in war. Again, up at Ballolampo above Palermo where the Salina family carriages were being 'shot' on their way to Donnafugata amid 'bare hillsides flaming yellow in the sun', the company's transport spread in a defile of stony slopes might have been some brigade headquarters in *lager* somewhere in the Western Desert. Closer to the 'shooting' an assistant director in a bush-shirt was wielding a walkie-talkie with expert ease. High above, between rocks, the sun glinted on massed cameras lying in wait like field-guns for the carriages to pass below. On a distant track Alain Delon as Tancredi, in top-hat and pegtop trousers, wheeled his horse like an elegant decoy.

To Sicilians who stand on the side of roads watching this with slightly dazed surprise these film-folk must seem to have unlimited resources; those closer to the organisation would also notice an ultimate ruthlessness where the film's interests are concerned which is again not unlike an army intent on winning a war. Actually the tactical administrative headquarters of Titanus in Palermo, mentioned with bated breath like some font of Providence as '*la Produzione*', is much subject to local pressures. The Mafia, *l'onorata societa*, has already caused a major change of location from one projected on the former Lampedusa estates at Palma di Montechiaro, in the worst *mafioso* district on the island. Now at the entrance to every set is to be seen a paunchy man of imposing aspect in singlet and straw hat; he was taken on as a watchdog after marching into the office and announcing himself as a Mafia leader who could provide 'protection' ('as if they would not have come to me if they'd wanted to arrange anything of that kind' murmured the Duke of Palma, Lampedusa's adopted son, who is attached to the company as Sicilian expert).

The Prince of Lampedusa, whose eye was so attuned to his fellow-countryman's reactions to invaders, would have had some fascinating, though no doubt muted, comments on the forces unleashed by the filming of his own book. In the tiny inner world of Palermo society, most of whose members are connected with or descended from characters in *The Leopard*, there is a mixture of alarm and fascination masked by well-bred detachment, a love-hate towards these outsiders who have come to portray '*la belle epoque*' of their own great-grandparents. The local Four Hundred (the exact number is 250) lie, now the heat has started, beneath the pines and breezes of the Mondello Yacht Club, commenting glancingly on these visitors from a social outer space who have so strangely become part of their summer. To them Visconti is an alarming renegade, while Burt Lancaster, whose huge yacht lies out beyond the mole making their own little craft look like cockle-shells, and who seems larger than life not only physically, must be like some invading tribal chieftain, an Alaric or Theodoric whose surprisingly good manners they can observe for themselves, as they have made him a member of the club and there he is lunching at the next table. Though last year this particular set did entertain the Prince and Princess of Liège, nowadays a a film-star of such rank is the nearest most Italians get to royalty.

The shooting began with barricades in a Palermo slum, Piazza dello Spasimo in the Arab quarter of the Kalsa, some two months ago. Now, as if the phase of popular revolution has been tamed by 'forces of order', the headquarters cars roll in and out of the portcochere of the lushest hotel, Villa Igeia. Down in the bar actors and producers, operating troops and staff, down Bloody Marys at fabulous prices under the indifferent eyes of rich elderly tourists. Along the coast of the Conca d'Oro a little season has whirled up among a few villas outside the normal letting range that have been taken by various members of the 'troupe'. Delon projects gay house-parties with friends from the Cote d'Azur mingling with permanent entourage of agent, body-guard and elocution coaches (he has two). Even the Hollywood make-up man (who, such are the improbabilities of the film-world, turns out to be much closer to a vice-roy than any of the Spanish vice-roys' descendants from baroque days down at the Club, being a nephew of the first Lord Wavell) has a villa overlooking the sea. Squire of this ephemeral summer colony is Lancaster himself, who has moved with his wife and five children into one of the last great country houses in as perfect running order as the Prince of Salina's a hundred years ago. Here, at Villa Scalea, home of the Lanza di Scalea, gardeners in green aprons sweep alleys beneath a long stucco facade, while behind shutters the cool rooms glisten with mirrors and rococo, and the only sounds are the faint tinkle of a fountain and the pad of heraldic-looking dogs on marble. Later this month that yacht in the harbour nearby will be making a state visit to the Messina film-festival; guests will be in Sicilian costume to contribute to the 'phantasmagorical evening' at Taormina promised in the letter of invitation.

Only the director himself, Luchino Visconti, is seldom seen *in giro* except on the set. This unlikely figure, Duke of Modrone from his father's side and millionaire from toothpaste factories on his mother's, is himself a breakaway from his own world, a Phillipe Egalite of film-land, who thinks Left and lives Right. In Italian show business his position is something akin to Reinhardt's or Diagelev's on an international plane which he is only now achieving. Founder of the whole school of Italian neo-realist films, opera and theatre producer on a splendid yet always personal scale, he is 'Maestro', to his Italian staff. There is something rather superb about his aloofness. Invitations, even from cousins, are not answered. Like a commander-in-chief protected by ADCs, or an oriental satrap surrounded by janisseries, he lives in the huge hulk of an ancient fort on the sea where Nelson once had his headquarters. Two months ago it was a vast ruin; now it is full of plumbing, furniture and footmen,



● *Director Luchino Visconti with his star, Alain Delon. 'In top-hat and pegtop trousers, wheeled his horse like an elegant decoy'*

. . . on safari with Visconti

Archibold Colquhoun, editor of Italian classics for Oxford University Press and authority on Italian literature, is dialogue director on Luchino Visconti's film of Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's novel, 'The Leopard'. The unit has spent the summer in Sicily—'fit place for the ageless or the primeval, noon-day demons, centaurs and the bandit Giuliano.' And for 'The Leopard'

ready to receive its august tenant until the end of summer. Here, after an exhausting day of personally surveying, animating, and sometimes participating in every detail of a 'take' (once his staff watched riveted as he personally stuffed a mattress with straw), Visconti relaxes amid his favourites, parlour-games are played, and the court-dance is said to be the twist.

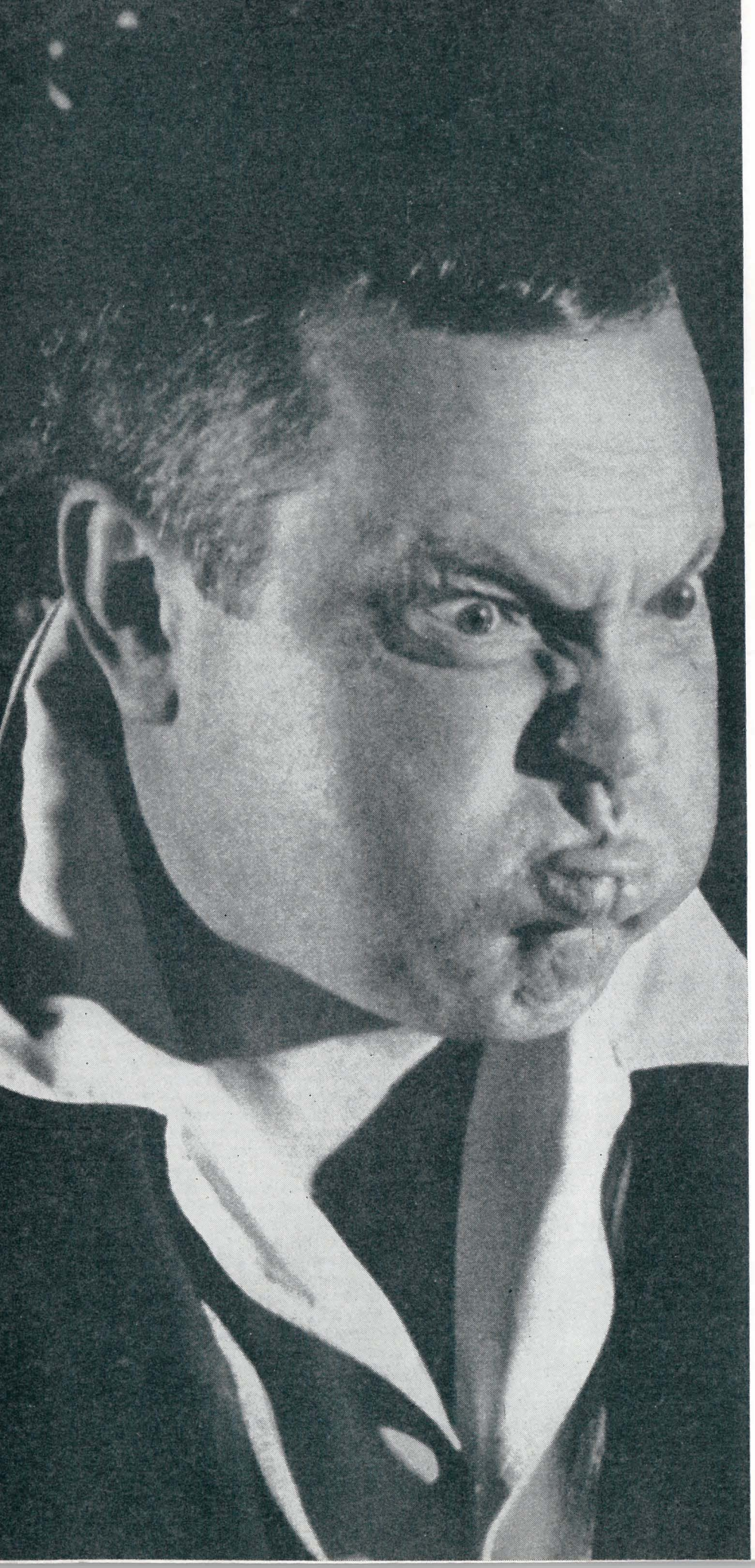
Film-work on location sets up a hallucinatory life of its own, with its own reality and its own personal relationships, often so intense that they do not seem part of the cat's cradle in which we are all involved. In location-work on *The Leopard* there is another element beyond the usual switchings of identity and swoppings of personality that fascinated Pirandello about filming; a kind of double or treble focus between characters in the book, their protagonists on the set, and their originals in real life. Since the author died only five years ago, a few months after finishing his one novel, there is even a parallel in age-groups. The author's adopted son, Gio di Mazzarino, Duke of Palma, model for the appearance and mannerisms of the Tancredi of the book, can be seen chatting with Alain Delon who takes the part; and there was one glimpse of them both flanking Visconti, surely himself animated by some partial self-identification with old Don Fabrizio of the novel, whose astronomical interests had so divided him from the life of his class.

One of the peak dramatic moments of the filming so far has been off-camera, and it took a young American publicity man, Leo Minoff, to arrange it. This was the first visit of the author's widow to the set. It happened at a villa outside Palermo, Descogrande, done up to represent the Villa Salina of the first and last chapters of the novel. The Princess of Lampedusa, ex-President of the Italian Psychoanalysts' Association, devoted tender of her husband's shrine (she has personally checked most of the 16 translations) is as potent and awe-inspiring a figure in her own field as Visconti is in his. They had not met before, nor had the Princess been shown the script. As she advanced down the splendid enfilade of salons furnished for the duration of the filming with heirlooms from the Mazzarino palace, a hush fell. On the crowded set tension hung in the air, affecting all present except the scene's two main protagonists. They met; 'just like a house of old aunts in the country', her voice was heard saying; they began discoursing with ease and grace as if no-one else were present; then Lancaster entered, was presented, cameras flashed ('Well, perhaps as there are so many lovely girls here'. . . came her murmur) and she sank on to a chair to watch Visconti direct Rina Morelli as the Princess of Salina, her own glistening black robes stealing all the colour from the brocade costumes and silken walls. An old gramophone struck up Bellini's '*Vi ravvizo, e luoghi ameni*' from La Somnambula . . .

At Boscogrande now only the retouched frescoes, and a floor with 'naked figures from mythology painted over the milky depths of the tiles' remain to puzzle art-historians and geneologists of the future, who will wonder what the Lampedusa prancing leopard can be doing amid the emblems of the mad Barons of Boscogrande. The miniatures and Trapani corals, the Hayez portraits and English hunting prints, the ormolu and porcelain objects and ivory work-baskets, have gone back to the vast palace in Palermo from whence they came, except for one or two taken either by passing peasantry who slipped through the guards or by members of the company as souvenirs, ('Now we'll see if the Mafia really works', murmurs Gio Mazzarino as he consults certain influential persons about the return of the stolen goods.) From a specially built observatory room nearby the actual telescopes and astrolabes used by the old star-gazing prince have returned to a museum. Now the villa with its great outside staircase by Marvuglia and its frescoes by Integuglielmi has gone back to its occupants at the time Titanus waved a magic wand.

The wand has moved on—spreading its own form of exaltation and devastation. At Ciminna, one of those lost towns at the end of a dust-track, one whole side of the main square has been rebuilt in 'exasperated' baroque to represent the facade of the Salina palace at Donnafugata. Here, at the scene of the Salina family's arrival, while a band played '*Noi siamo zingarelli*' and towns-folk streamed across the square in welcome, Visconti himself was hurrying round with bellows, scattering dust (Max Factor's best) over Lancaster and his party, muttering to himself; 'Death, death, like the corpses in the Capucins! This symbolises the first signs of the death of a class!'

Death takes over, with the heavenly bodies, at the grand climax of the film, the Ponteleone ball. This bids fair to eclipse in splendour the Bestegui ball in Palazzo Labia in Venice ten years ago. Palazzo Cengi, its proposed setting, is one of the three great houses still in private hands in Palermo, home of the Princes of San Vincenzo, scene of a state tea-party for King George V in 1925. Set in its own square deep in the slums of old Palermo with saffron and white facade interspersed by hanging garden, it dreams over the surrounding squalor. Up a double branching staircase fit for the appearence of Armide are a gallery and ballroom of oriental splendour, French rococo twisted and gilt and re-gilt by local craftsmen, all reflected in innumerable mirrors, 'conferring on the room', like that of Palazzo Ponteleone in the novel, 'the look of some superb jewel-case shut off from an unworthy world'. Who will the guests be? The compilers of the lists have run into Visconti's visual perfectionism; none of the women at the ball are to look in the slightest bit sunburnt. Under the pines of the Mondello Yacht Club the bearers of the island's great names, Lanza, Moncada, Alliata, murmur 'Surely Stefanina San Vincanzo will never allow "film-extras" in her house?', and wonder if they might sacrifice their bathing and dance in the ball for charity. No-one realises more than they that change is in the air. It is likely to be the last great ball on that scale in such a setting to take place at Palermo. After it, for everyone, extras and grandees, 'in the empty supper-room will remain only dirty plates, glasses with dregs of wine which servants, glancing round, hurriedly drain; while through the chinks in the shutters filters a plebeian light of dawn'.



the

In an old and disused railway station close to the Place de la Concorde and its obelisk, on the banks of the Seine, Orson Welles was shooting his tenth film, *The Trial*, based on Kafka's remarkable book.

On hearing that Welles was in Paris my first reaction was to try to interview him at length on his work as a director and actor, and to get him to discuss his conception of production, the philosophy behind his films, the special super-human quality of his characters and his future plans and projects. At once I began to make enquiries and alerted my acquaintances in an endeavour to gain enough influence so that the great Welles would condescend to receive me. It was all in vain. Apart from a tiny privileged few, nobody was able to speak to him or to ask him any questions. To try to photograph him or make a report for television was out of the question. Orson Welles didn't want to know anything about anybody outside his work. However, as I am a little stubborn and it was well worth the trouble, I persevered until I managed to get permission to follow the shooting of *The Trial* only a few feet away from Welles.

So, for a fortnight, I followed step by step the work of one of the most important directors in the history of the cinema and one of the most accursed as far as producers are concerned. Before going on to describe what I saw at his side it is, I think, worth going into some detail over events in *The Trial*, which, more than a novel, could be labelled a prophetic meditation.

It is five o'clock in the morning. Joseph K is awakened by a man who has entered his bedroom whilst he has been asleep and who announces that from this moment on he is under arrest.

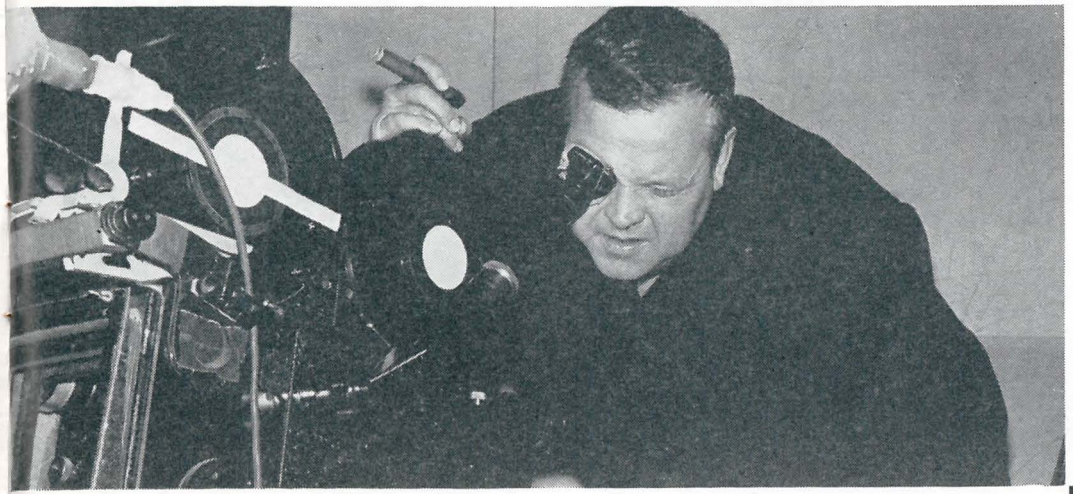
This is the first scene in the film. The whole of the rest of the film is no more than a description of Joseph K's vain attempt to discover what he is accused of and who accuses him.

For K himself is a young man with no history. Thirty and handsome (Orson Welles has chosen Tony Perkins to play the part) he occupies an important post in a large organisation. Women admire him and the future seems bright. He lives an irreproachably moral life in a boarding house.

It is to this boarding house, run by Madame Grumbach (Madeleine Robinson), that the official (Arnoldo Foa) comes at dawn to arrest Joseph K, followed by two inspectors of frightening appearance (Jess Hahn and Billy Kearns) who tell him that his arrest is purely formal and that whilst his trial is being arranged he will be free to live just as he has done up to the present. The only demand that

● *Funny faces for Perkins—but he orders writer Martinez to be thrown out. Picture from 'La Fiera del Cinema'*

trial of Orson Welles



Orson Welles, Hollywood golden boy of 'Citizen Kane' and uncontrollable genius of later years, has filmed Kafka's 'The Trial' in Paris. Enrique Martinez was the only critic allowed to watch and he describes in this article the way Welles directs

● Above: *Camera-eye-view for Welles of a scene in his film of Kafka's 'The Trial'*. Right: *Welles rehearses with Romy Schneider—shooting was held up for two days—but she was perfect*

they make is that he should follow the incidents of his trial and be at all times available should he be needed by Justice.

From this moment onwards the life of the accused K takes on a Dante-esque dimension of perpetual nightmare.

When a young girl, Mademoiselle Burstner (Jeanne Moreau), who lives in the room next to his, returns on the morning of his arrest from the cabaret where she works, K is waiting for her. Although they only know one another by sight, she treats him as a good friend and the beginnings of a romance are evident. But the moment K tells her how he has come to be arrested, the girl becomes enraged and violently throws him out of her room.

A few days later K notices that Mademoiselle Burstner has left the boarding house without telling him. In the street he meets Mademoiselle Pittl (Suzanne Flon), a friend of Mademoiselle Burstner, who begins to scream at him, 'It is your fault! All your fault'. Joseph K does not understand. To escape from the anguish of being accused without having committed a crime, K tries to go on living in the same way that he used to before the accusation was made.

One night he even goes to the Opera, and it is here that the trial begins to take shape. During the performance an usherette delivers an envelope. A man is waiting for him. It is the inspector, who takes him to the office of the Judge of Inspection. In spite of the lateness of the hour, the judge wishes to see him immediately.

They go through an immense entrance into an enormous building that is built in an architectural style too overloaded to be a station and too old and dirty to be a palace. Passages lead off that never finish. K has just entered the kingdom of the Law. On all sides there are old, miserable, dirty and badly dressed men who are at once resigned and terrified and who appear to wander without direction or aim. Finally K arrives in the presence of the judge.

After a long interview, K comes out of the office as ignorant of his crime as he was when he entered, but with a greater anxiety about how long his freedom will last.

In the midst of the suffocating atmosphere of the place, K's eyes alight on an extraordinarily beautiful woman (Elsa Martinelli), who approaches him and offers her help until a big and strong young student (Heltzmann) takes her by the belt and pulls her away. She makes no protest. She even begins to laugh.

The following morning, lost in the immense room of his ultra modern office K receives a visit from his uncle Max who, strangely, is well aware of his arrest and who has come up from the country to help him. Max advises his nephew to consult a famous lawyer friend of his (Orson Welles).

The old lawyer is ill in bed but maintains amorous relations with his young nurse, Leni (Romy Schneider). As soon as she sees K, Leni takes him mysteriously into an adjoining room . . . On returning to the lawyer's room, K is told that the lawyer has heard a great deal of talk about his trial and that in his opinion things do not look very favourable. This conversation only increases K's anxiety. His lack of comprehension of the new world he finds himself involved in is now total and complete.

Caught up in the net of the accusation, K finds himself little by little changing from an accused man to a guilty one. His anguish grows. 'What am I accused of?' He becomes obsessed by this question to which there is no reply. Soon a new question poses itself. 'For what am I to be condemned?' For he is quite certain that soon they are going to condemn him. He knows it. And he knows that he will struggle in vain. Nevertheless he continues to pay frequent visits to the lawyer (we do not know whether this is on account of the lawyer or Leni). Following Leni's advice he visits a painter, Titorelli, who is on good terms with the judges, whose portraits he has painted. These final attempts to enlist Titorelli's help are desperate. K knows it, and after each try he finds himself more dejected than ever. Now together with the feeling of anguish is a loathing of the corrupt, pitiless and mad Justice he has encountered.

A well intentioned priest who, as chaplain of the prisoners, forms part of the horrible judicial machine, is the last person to whom the accused and condemned K asks for help. The inability of the priest to help confirms him in his despair. And K at last gives up the struggle.

At daybreak on the following morning two inspectors call for him. K follows without the least resistance. They take him to court. On the way he thinks he can make out the figure of Mademoiselle Burstner. The two inspectors take him to a quarry, and force him to throw himself down on the stone. In the

distance he vaguely perceives a human form. 'Someone who has come to save me?' The inspector has already nailed a dagger in the centre of his heart.

'Like a dog!'

These are the last words of Joseph K who dies murmuring 'What crime?'

Orson Welles, as can be seen from this summary of the film's plot, has stuck faithfully to Kafka's book. What slight modification there is has been made through Welles' desire to make the work more easily understandable. Kafka created a work shot through with anguish. Welles' *The Trial* is submerged in anguish. In order to achieve this effect he has gone back to the style of *Citizen Kane* with its big crane movements, its camera at floor level and its monumental tracking. What we see is the whole Welles box of tricks from his early style, governed by the twenty two years of reflection that separate the two films. In *The Trial* the shots are longer. Some go on for six minutes although the total number in the script goes beyond 700.

By means of the movement and the alternation between long shots and short (sometimes as abrupt as lightning) Welles makes tangible the advancing doubt, the paralysing dread, the penetrating worry, the peace that disappears and the solitude that sets in.

With lighting the image acquires a new dimension: anguish. Welles makes use of a new American emulsion which is extremely sensitive. And, contrary to what one might expect, he lights the set with voltaic arcs of enormous power. Five kilowatt projectors are used for simple effects and particular details. The arc lamps with their white light cut the volume down to size. The result is a contrasted image with enormous masses of black shadow which spreads around the light, little by little invading it, surrounding it and destroying it.

The sets, together with the light, are the essence of the film itself. There are two principal sets which provide plastic symbols of our modern world. The office where Joseph K works is the first. It is an immense and very modern hangar containing more than 700 tables on each of which is placed a modern calculating machine. Movement, noise and atmosphere render this office a hell of precision. The machines are more perfect and more modern than man himself. Man has become an insignificant slave.

The second set is the palace where the Law reigns. The old d'Orsay station, fallen into decay with the passing of time, with its enormous and dirty vault, its modern-style lamps, its twisted staircases, and its vastness truly represents the all-powerful endemic laws which sow the seeds of terror and death amongst the men who live within its shade without knowing the sun-light and infinite horizons which extend beyond the enormous and filthy walls which surround them. All

case for the defence

• Orson Welles, the actor, will argue but not disobey. Richard Fleischer, who directed him in 'Compulsion' and 'Crack in the Mirror', writes about 'a man who knows it all'

When Orson Welles is an actor, he stays an actor. He neither makes suggestions nor offers any advice on the film-making itself. I have directed him in two films, *Compulsion* and *Crack in the Mirror*, and we got along famously. With a man like Welles you expect him to have his own interpretation, but it has to be an interpretation that the director agrees with. I had no real conflict with him on either film. Sometimes when we didn't agree we argued about it and I must say that Orson would bow to the director's point of view. Being a director himself he knows what it means to the overall film to disobey a director. Many actors don't see that, they see only their own parts. If they want to go their own way they'll fight to do it even though it may destroy the picture. You can't accuse Orson of that, he sees the whole picture all the time in his mind.

He's a great technician: he's a man who knows it all. He knew where the lights were, and when he was in or out of the light. And whatever I did with the camera, Orson knew exactly what I was doing. I didn't have to explain my intention as you sometimes have to with other actors. You say 'Now here's the camera. When you turn around it'll be over there' and they say 'Where's the camera?' Orson knew, he'd say 'I know what you're going to do with that camera, you're going to move it over there, aren't you?' This was a great help to me. Orson can see how a scene is going and if the timing is off a little he'll adjust himself so that the camera will reach its position comfortably—he'll time himself to the camera. Actors less aware will say 'I have to go from A to B and I'm going to be there on cue' and they let the camera take care of itself.

Orson has one peculiarity that's really amusing. Dean Stockwell and I got a big kick out of it when we were making *Compulsion*. When an actor has to perform on camera and speak to someone not being photographed with him, the other actor usually stands next to the camera so that they can look at each other, act and get the cues back and forth as they say the dialogue. Orson is violently against this. 'Who'd ever expect anyone to do that?' He wants nothing there, nobody. He doesn't want anyone in his sight line and no one can read the lines to him that he has to cue to. He'll go through the whole scene and say his lines, giving exactly the right pause for the other person to speak his lines, and come in again right on cue. It's really remarkable to watch, just fantastic. I've never seen anyone else do it.

I think an actor behind the camera would disturb Orson's concentration. He would rather imagine it and concentrate on his own performance than be thrown by another actor who is not really acting. When an actor's behind the camera he's never as good as when he's in front, and in my experience the actor behind the camera invariably stumbles on his lines—I've never seen it happen any other way. And that distracts the actor trying to perform in front of the camera. I think this is what worries Orson, and he'd rather not have the other actor behind the camera at all.

Actually we worked only nine days with Orson on *Compulsion*. I enjoyed working with him enormously because he is such a stimulating person. I've never seen anyone work so hard in my life. Neither of us had seen Clarence Darrow, although we had both done a lot of reading about him. We had many pictures of him and his style of dress and were able to adjust to a concept of Darrow's thoughts and appearance. This was really Orson's own interpretation of what Darrow must have been like. We agreed that he should underplay, just relax and let the part take over. We didn't want Orson to dominate the part, and I don't think he did. One of the important things is that Orson had great respect for Clarence Darrow. He wouldn't be presumptuous enough to say 'I can be more theatrical or a better actor than Clarence Darrow'. The part was so rich he just let Darrow be himself, and it was easy to do that way.

Crack in the Mirror was, of course, different. Orson had two characters to play, something every actor loves. But generally, at least from my experience, he tries not to dominate a part. He's a very sincere performer.

• *Welles as lawyer Clarence Darrow in Richard Fleischer's 'Compulsion' (with Diane Varsi). As an actor, he's a great technician*

this of course is part of Welles' special baroque manner in which symbolism abounds without, however, at any point touching on that of Fellini, for example. Everything is twisted, exuberant, cosmic—the enormous bed of the lawyer with its dragons and tapestry, the mirrors, the archives, the office files, the lamp shades that drop dust.

And what about Orson Welles, the director? The impression that he makes in person corresponds exactly to the legend that has grown up around him. Big, strong and stout, deep voiced and with his enormous cigar, walking along in the midst of technicians, cables and half assembled sets, he gives the impression of a lion shut in behind the bars of his cage.

He makes the actors rehearse a good deal. He takes them into a corner away from everyone else for an hour. Orson talks to them, repeats his aims, tells them what he expects of them even down to the tone of voice. It is not a question of seeing whether the actors have learnt the script by heart. It is a question of introducing them to the atmosphere of the scene, the character of the rôle and its reality. Sometimes an hour is not long enough and Welles rehearses for four, six or even ten hours. (I do not know whether it is usual with him but while I was there shooting was held up for two days because Welles was rehearsing with Romy Schneider and Tony Perkins for a whole day, from noon till seven in the evening.) The actor plays a very important part in Welles system of direction and on this account the attention that he dedicates to his players is very great.

Once he is satisfied with an actor's work, Welles goes on to rehearse the camera movements and speed. Examining the set up he modifies what has been planned, changing the direction and intensity of the lights. Once all this has been arranged to his satisfaction, he rehearses two or three times the placing of the actors and then rapidly prepares to shoot. His voice can be heard for miles around. 'Motor—action' (the word action is pronounced in a very special way—half American, half French). Rarely does Welles take a scene more than two or three times. Generally the first take is alright. He repeats it just to be safe in case of an accident during the developing of the film. At times, of course, there is an exception. On one occasion he had to repeat a very simple scene 13 times. Not because the camera movement was difficult or because the actor's script was tricky. No. Simply because Orson Welles was in good spirits. Every time that Perkins began to speak his lines, Welles made faces and funny gestures to make him laugh. And, inevitably, Perkins laughed. And Welles' guffaws made the arc lights above the set dance.

Certainly these high spirits did not prevent him from being disagreeable with everybody not connected with the film. For example, myself. Each time he caught sight of me he ordered the studio manager to throw me out. This of course could not be done as I had special authorisation from the producer to be there. However I was at least made to retreat and hide behind some unused part of the set. Generally Welles only spoke to his direction crew and actors and with his daughter who from time to time came to see him at work.

In spite of giving himself the airs of genius, and in spite of his enormous cigars and his appearance of ox-like strength, Orson Welles seemed to me to reveal a side of himself that was full of timidity, excessively sensitive and even fearful. The simple presence of a stranger made him nervous. If an actor put forward his point of view, Welles became pensive. In fact I am not at all surprised that he has wanted to work on a film adaptation of *The Trial*. I believe that Kafka and Welles have many points of contact. They both feel terrified of our modern civilisation whose vicious tentacles are taking mankind in their grip. And this impression is confirmed by people who know Welles and have heard him talk at length.

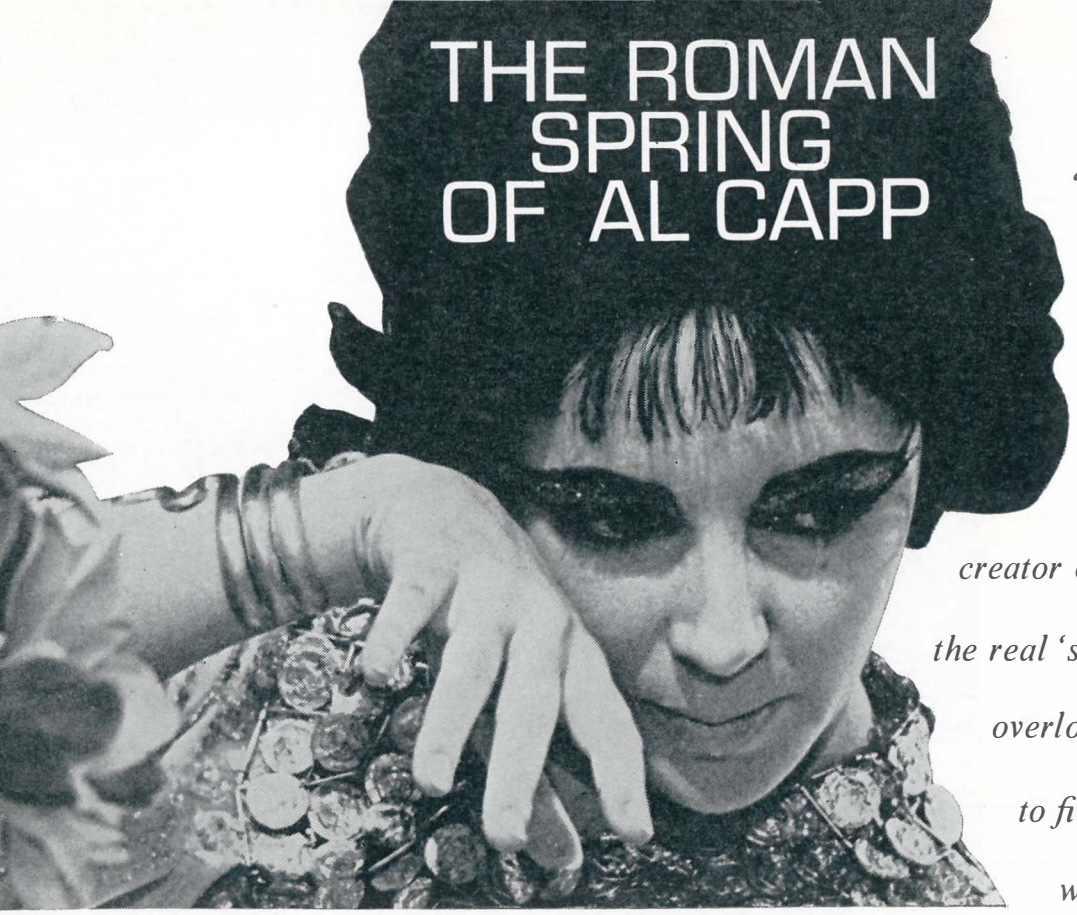
The shooting of *The Trial* comes to an end. Within a week Welles will be left alone and for three or four months he will work on the editing. Let us hope that the producer will not do as so many others have done, and that Welles will be left to finish the film completely. Producer Alejandro Salkind who gave Abel Gance an opportunity to express himself afresh with his latest film, *Napoleon*, has placed 650 million francs at the disposal of 'the cursed director' Orson Welles. And at present Alexander Salkind is satisfied. The shooting period was less than had been allowed for, although overtime went up tremendously. When Welles feels inspired there is no stopping him. Shooting that has been arranged to finish at half past six will sometimes continue until the early hours. Undoubtedly it is marvellous that Welles should be able to continue working in a burst of enthusiasm; the quality of the acting and direction proves this. This sort of thing, however, does not appeal very much to the technicians. But at any rate the millions budgeted for the film have been enough. Genius is not always ruinous.

● *A Welles ambition: to complete a film on bull-fighting*

Among Welles' future plans are two films that he has decided to get on with immediately. First he will finish *Don Quixote* (The subject with him is taboo—any mention of it makes him wild). He needs ten more minutes on it. Only ten minutes and there will be another great film. Up till now however he has not been able to find the money to complete it. With what he makes from *The Trial* he will finish *Don Quixote*. Moreover he hopes to meet a producer who will give him a chance to complete a film on bull-fighting in Spain. The theme will be the friendship of two men in the face of death. It was his friend Hemingway who initiated Welles in the mysteries of the bull-fight and I think that the subject is particularly suited to him. The contrast of sun and shade, life and death, fear and courage fall specifically within his own universe. (And it appears that plans are well advanced as Welles recently told Malraux that he would begin shooting in August.)

In the meantime we can look forward to seeing *The Trial*, a modern commentary on Pascal's deliberation on the misery of mankind without God which Orson Welles is at this moment shooting in Paris, very close to the Place de la Concorde and the Seine.

THE ROMAN SPRING OF AL CAPP



'Cleopatra' is finished at last. Its star, Elizabeth Taylor, made headline news from Tokyo to Rome; but Al Capp, creator of Li'l Abner, had a hunch the real 'star' of the film had been overlooked. He went to Rome to find out. His discoveries would make a sphinx smile

I was one of the hundreds of correspondents sent to Rome last winter to find out what Liz Taylor was *really* like. But something happened. Halfway across the black Atlantic, I suddenly realised that I could make a truly valuable contribution to world understanding. Millions of words had been written about Miss Taylor. But there hadn't been a single story written about the one human being who had borne most to see this picture through. I mean Eddie Fisher.

You were always seeing pictures of Liz flouncing along the Via Veneto on her shopping sprees, but who, I asked myself, was there in the out-of-focus background, staggering under the load of purchases? Eddie Fisher. Whenever you saw Liz oozing out of her chair at a Roman nightclub, it was Eddie Fisher who was standing behind her, bent under the burden of her two-ton mink coat.

This man, I decided, was one of the unsung, or rather non-singing heroes of our time. And, I further decided, something had to be done about it. Without a moment's loss, I began.

One of the stewardesses on my Pan Am jet flight was Ruthie, a typical, twenty-three-year-old American female, good eyes, good figure, good heart, and engaged to a midshipman at the US Naval Academy.

'Has Eddie Fisher ever been a passenger on any of your flights?' I asked.

'I once had an E Fisher', she said, 'but I'm not sure it was the same one. He didn't act like a celebrity. He was no trouble at all, and very quiet, except that he kept humming *Oh, Mein Papa*'.

'That was the guy all right', I said. 'I don't think anyone else in the world hums that'.

'You wouldn't believe the terrible things they write about him and Liz', said Ruthie 'I get to read the European magazines left on the plane. Some say Liz isn't in love with Richard Burton at all, that she *really* loves her director, Joe Mankiewicz. Others say she does love Burton, who took her away from Mankiewicz, and now that Mankiewicz is mad at her, she may lose her job in the picture.

'How can any sane person write such stuff? In the first place, don't they know Burton is married? So how *could* she be in love with him? As for Mr Mankiewicz, why he's more than fifty. It's just not nice to spread rumours that a man of his age fools around with girls. And don't they know Liz couldn't love anybody else but Eddie, for one simple reason: she's married to him. I believe that Eddie and Liz's love is lasting, and so is Debbie's for Harry Karl'.

At the Rome airport there was a message that my car to the *Cleopatra* set would be fifteen minutes late. I decided to use that time calling my old friend, Orson Welles. If anyone could tell me frankly and fully what Eddie Fisher was really like, Orson could, because if anyone is always frank and always full, he is.

His butler answered and told me that he was at his summer place in Ostia. Was there anything he could do for me?

'Has Eddie Fisher ever been a guest at your place?'

'I think so', he said, 'but I'm not sure he was the famous one. Because of how little trouble he was. Certainly a very quiet young man'.

'How quiet? Didn't he even sing?'

'He began to, once. A new American song hit, *Oh, Mein Papa.* But he stopped when they asked him to'.

Cinecittà is a good hour's drive from Rome. A couple of public relations men, an Italian and an American, took me to lunch at Cinecittà's restaurant.

'What is Eddie Fisher really like?' I asked.

'He's really no trouble at all', said the American. 'Liz, being really professional, works hard all day, with no trouble from Eddie. At night she studies for the next day. Eddie is no trouble. On her days off she goes shopping, or to a restaurant. Eddie goes with her, but causes no trouble'.

'How does he spend his time? Does he sing?'

'Only when he's happy', said the Italian, 'but never loud enough to cause any trouble'.

'He also follows people', said the American. 'But very quietly. Sometimes he follows Joe Mankiewicz, sometimes Walter Wanger'.

'Where?'

'Anywhere. He wants to be a producer. He follows them to learn how they do it'.

'How long will he have to follow them until he, too, will become a producer?'

'Only until *Cleopatra* is finished'.

'And then will some company let him produce a picture all by himself?'

'Twentieth Century-Fox has already given him the money to produce *four* pictures'.

'They must have quite a bit of confidence in Eddie'.

'Unlimited. He only had to guarantee that two of them would star Liz. They don't give a damn what he does with the money for the other two'.

Walter Wanger dropped by.

'I understand you see a lot of Eddie Fisher', I said, 'especially when you look over your shoulder. What's he really like?'

'He's really no trouble at all', said Wanger. 'He doesn't say anything. He doesn't do any-

thing. Anything troublesome I mean. He's just sort of around, taking everything in'.

'But what about his spare time?' I said. 'What does he do when he isn't saying anything or doing anything?'

'Liz and Eddie are on a big intellectual kick', said Wanger. 'Their major interest is in world politics. My office has standing orders to send them every book published on political subjects. We must send them a dozen or so a week'.

'And what are their political opinions?'

'Artists', said Wanger sternly, 'don't have time to read that sort of stuff'.

'What is Eddie's home life like?'

'Despite all the rumours', said Wanger, 'it's ideal. Liz has fourteen dogs. And what a doll! She named them all after Eddie's friends—Max, Mitch, Marty, Moe, Marvin, Mischa, Melvin, Morris, Merve . . . Is that fourteen?'

'It must be', I said. 'I'd like to see Eddie. Is he around?'

'It's hard to tell', said the American public relations man. 'He's so untroublesome. I'll try to find him. While you're waiting, why not interview some of the little people in *Cleopatra?*'

They sent in a six-foot-one California blonde who was playing a handmaiden.

'What is Eddie Fisher really like?' I asked.

'He is a doll', said the blonde. 'Liz and he are not at all like the papers make them out to be. They're like any other ordinary young couple. They live with fourteen dogs. I think they're named after all the writers on *Cleopatra:* Max, Mitch, Marty, Moe, Marvin, Mischa, Melvin, Morris . . .'

'That's pretty near fourteen', I said.

The public relations man returned to say they hadn't been able to locate Eddie. There was a rumour that he was in the city. They suggested I return to Rome, check in at my hotel, and leave dinner open, in case they found him.

I had chosen to stay at the Excelsior because of its service. Not its room service, which is adventurous, or its phone service, which is suspenseful, or its twenty-four-hour valet service, which teaches you why Rome is called the Eternal City, but for its unsurpassed cigarette-lighting service.

No matter where you happen to be in the Excelsior—in bed, in the men's room, in a moving lift—if you so much as begin to put a cigarette in your mouth, a splendidly uniformed Excelsior attendant instantly assumes shape and lights it for you. That's Old World luxury.

There were two messages waiting for me. One was from Cinecittà saying Eddie couldn't be located, but the public relations men would positively produce him the next morning. The other was from Federico Fellini.

I had never met the creator of *La Dolce Vita*, but I'd written an ugly piece about him a few months before. I'd said Fellini didn't know what he was talking about in *La Dolce Vita*, since what he was talking about was how boring it is to be depraved. I claimed that if people were really bored with depravity, they'd try something else for kicks, like goodness. The reason they kept up with their depravity was, clearly, that depravity must be fun, and that Fellini either didn't have the sense or the guts to say so.

Now it's one thing to call a man in Rome an idiot when you're in New York, but when you're in Rome too, and he knows you're there, it's a mighty uncomfortable feeling.

Well, while I was explaining to the Excelsior phone operator that I'd call Mr Fellini back some time, let's say some time when I was back in New York, another operator cut in and said she'd already called Mr Fellini for me, and he was on the line.

It turned out not to be him exactly, but some other guy who said that he was acting for Mr Fellini, and would I meet Mr Fellini in the Excelsior lobby the next day at dawn? As a matter of honour, I had to accept.

I decided to spend that evening taking what could turn out to be my last look at Rome.

I asked the doorman to get a cab. Any cab, I wasn't going anywhere special, just random sightseeing.

'But for sightseeing', he said, 'an American should have a special cab'.

I said that would be nice and gave him a special tip. He beckoned over the first one in line.

'*Un Americano*', said the doorman, presenting me to the driver as if I were a gift.

'*Grazie*', beamed the cab driver in the tone of one saying, 'It's just what I wanted'. And *he* tipped the doorman.

That's the Via Veneto. Everybody treating everyone else. Mainly to Americans.

The driver in good English asked me where would I like to go?

'To the Colosseum', I said.

'You've never seen it before?'

'Ten years ago', I said.

'Then why waste money seeing it again? It doesn't change. Why not see the New Colosseum?'

I said I didn't know they'd put up a new one.

'Oh, no', he laughed. 'The new one is an old one, too, but they've newly dug it up, so naturally it is the new one to me'.

I said that sounded fine. It was necessary to cross the Tiber River, up and back, about twenty times to reach what might have been the one remaining bit of a slum clearance project they hadn't torn down yet, or might have been—

'The New Colosseum!' my driver announced with a flourish. Well, it might have been.

'Stop at the Fountain of Trevi on the way back', I said. We had to cross the Tiber from right to left and back again so many times returning, I fell asleep.

When I woke up, we were parked on the street alongside the fountain. My driver was standing outside, smiling in at me.

'No need for you to get out to toss a coin', he said. 'I'll be happy to do it for you, and you can close your eyes and make your wish from the car in comfort'.

I gave him one of those large hundred-lire pieces, but I was slow in closing my eyes. As he walked away, I saw him put his hand in his pocket and draw out a tiny coin the size of a ten-lire piece.

He tossed that in the fountain, and I made my wish.

I wished that Excelsior operator hadn't been so damned efficient and gotten Fellini's second on the line. Dawn wasn't far off.

The Excelsior lobby was empty except for a short, stocky man who advanced upon me with blazing eyes.

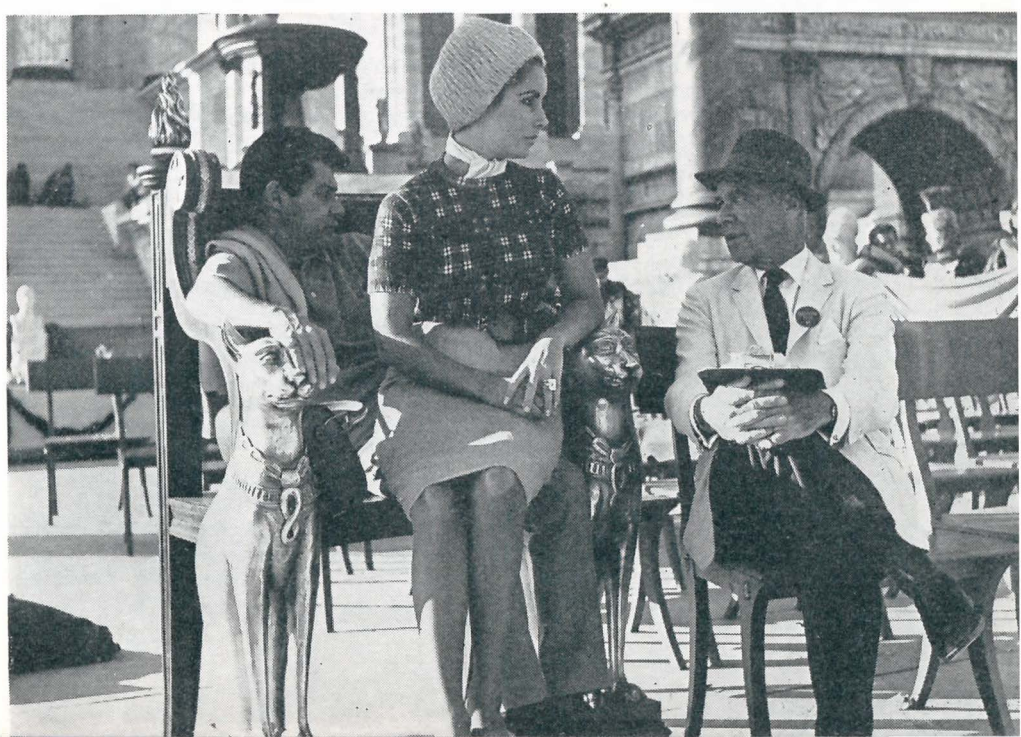
'Capp?' he demanded.

'You must be Fellini', I said. 'Now about that piece I wrote about you—'

'You put *me* in your cartoons?' he said, enchanted.

'No', I said, 'I write articles in my spare time'.

'I didn't know that', said Fellini, 'but it's nice. Everyone should have a hobby. My hobby is meeting cartoonists. I wanted to be one when I was younger. But I was a failure. So now I do what I can to make a living. *La Strada, Cabiria, Dolce Vita*, things like that. Still, I get as great a thrill meeting cartoonists as others do meeting movie names. I wanted to meet Bud Fisher, the creator of the incomparable *Mutt and Jeff*, when he was in Rome, but before I got around to it, he went back to America and died. I didn't meet George McManus—whose *Maggie and Jiggs*, I know you will agree, was the last truly funny comic strip ever created—when he was here. He went home to America and died. Well, when I



● *Eddie Fisher borrows the queen's throne while wife Elizabeth Taylor borrows Eddie's lap for a production conference with producer Walter Wanger*

heard that you were here, I said 'Federico, you must drop everything, rush over to the Excelsior, and meet Capp before he—' He stopped.

'Before I go home to America and die', I said. 'Perhaps you can help me with my mission in Rome. Perhaps you can tell me—what is Eddie Fisher really like?'

'I've never met him', said Fellini, 'but everyone says he's no trouble at all'.

'Do you think, from what you've heard about him, that he has the qualities to be a successful producer?'

'I'm afraid not', said Fellini. 'I hear he is decent and honest. Successful pictures are produced like this: I am under contract to de Laurentiis. I have had the idea for *Dolce Vita* for a long time. I tell de Laurentiis I need six months of peace to write it. For six months he doesn't bother me. He keeps paying me. Then I show it to him.

'"Federico", he says, "What the hell kind of a story is this?" "It's about rotten people having a rotten time", I say. "Forget this, Federico", he says. "Write a story about someone who is good. Paul Newman. I don't care what rotten things you have him do. As long as Paul Newman does it, it'll be good enough for me, because everybody knows all Paul Newman pictures make money".

'I said positively no Paul Newman. I tried to explain why *Dolce Vita* could be a good picture, even without Paul Newman. True, it's about rotten people. But we *call* them rotten. And that's good.

'"Besides", I said, "I don't think you're much of a judge of goodness. You have only one standard. If it makes money, it's good. There are other standards".

'"It's possible", said de Laurentiis. "I will get the six leading critics. You read them your story. Let them judge".

'He gets all the critics together. They say, "Federico, forget this picture. Do the Paul Newman picture. It will make a lot of money. It will be good for the Italian economy to make so much money". They repeat de Laurentiis word for word.

'I say, "You have all been bribed".

'They say, "No. That is a lie. De Laurentiis paid us, but for our time only. You don't think we would sit here and listen to your rotten story for nothing?"

'I took the script to this old man with millions. God knows how he made them. But now he is so old and so rich, I felt he might take a gamble. He knows nothing about motion pictures. It is possible he has never seen one. But he knows life. I gave him the script. He didn't open it . . . He just held it.

'"This is very heavy, Federico", he said. "How much will it cost to make all this?"

'"A million dollars".

'"What is it about?"

'"Perversion. I show how perverted the Romans are".

'"In detail?".

'"I omit nothing".

'"I will give you the million dollars", said the old man. "I will also buy up your contract from de Laurentiis so that he will have no claim on the picture, and put you on a small salary".

'"Old man", I said, "you are a gambler".

'"Not me", said the old man, "I know life".

'And he was right. He was no gambler, and, oh, how he knew life. The picture has made nearly forty million dollars. He gets all of it'.

'Certainly he must have shown his appreciation in some way?' I asked.

Fellini pulled up his jacket cuff. I blinked.

'Have you ever seen a more vulgar wrist watch? The old man gave it to me after *Dolce Vita* passed its tenth million. I'll wear it to my grave. Every time it ticks it says, "Federico, you're an idiot". It's valuable to be reminded'.

A page came up and told me I was wanted on the phone. I said good-bye to Fellini. It was the studio calling. They were still trying to locate Eddie Fisher. He might be home, or he might be in Paris. 'He's so little trouble, it's hard to tell where he is', the public relations man said, 'but if you stay put we guarantee to turn him up'. I said I would be breakfasting at Doney's, the sidewalk café adjoining the Excelsior.

I chose a table between a red-headed girl and two young men in dark glasses. An older man who had never combed his hair came up to me and offered me a copy of a magazine. It was *Epoca*, the Italian *Life* magazine.

'*No, grazie*', I said. It was all the Italian I knew.

'*Please*,' he said. It was all the English he knew.

He kept thrusting the magazine at me and jabbering in Italian and I kept saying in English that I didn't want to buy it.

'He isn't trying to sell you *Epoca*', said the redheaded girl. 'He wants to give it to you. He's an editor.'

'Ask him to join me', I said. 'He ought to know what Eddie Fisher is really like'.

After an interchange, the redhead said:

'He says Eddie Fisher has never caused him any trouble, and he hopes that you won't. His publisher has assigned him to get you to draw the face of the most beautiful Italian movie star'.

On the back of the menu, I drew Claudia Cardinale.

The editor expressed his pleasure, and then said something more in Italian. The redhead looked puzzled.

'Although I speak your language', she said to me, 'I have never been to America. Perhaps you will understand. He says, "Now combine Claudia Cardinale's face with the naked body of Li'l Abner. *Epoca* will call the drawing *Capp's Ideal*"'.

'It isn't my ideal and I won't draw it', I said.

One of the young men in the dark glasses joined the discussion. 'We think it would make a charming picture'.

The other drew his chair closer. 'We'd *love* to watch you draw it'.

Well, now I knew what *they* were.

The redhead was back in. 'The editor says he doesn't see why the face of Claudia Cardinale wouldn't combine divinely with the tantalising figure of L'il Abner'.

I rose indignantly. So *he* was one, too.

He grabbed my sleeve and sputtered away.

'He says *Epoca* is a fine magazine', translated the redhead, 'and many of the world's greatest artists have drawn naked women for it'.

'Then ask him why in the hell he thought I'd be the first to draw a naked man?'

'He says, "Isn't Li'l Abner a Rubensian blonde"?'

'Tell him, "No, that's Daisy Mae".'

'That's the nude he wants you to draw'.

The two in the dark glasses turned away, bored.

As I explained why, being an American symbol, Daisy Mae couldn't be drawn nude, or even thought of that way, any more than the Statue of Liberty—an Excelsior page appeared saying there was an urgent call from Cinecittà for me.

'You've found Eddie Fisher?' I asked.

'Oh, the hell with that', said the public relations man. 'This is serious. Liz heard you were here yesterday, and she's upset because nobody told her, and she didn't see you. We're spending four thousand dollars a day here, you know. We can't afford to have her upset.'

I said I would drop everything and be there in less than two thousand dollars.

When I arrived at the Press Office, Liz wasn't there waiting for me. The public relations people said she was having a costume problem, and they took me to lunch. That lasted about three hours, with bulletins constantly arriving about the progress of the costume problem. 'Would I go back to the Press Office and wait until it was solved?' the public relations men wanted to know.

I felt smug. Earlier when some congressmen were kept waiting, they raised hell. But I was as little trouble as Eddie Fisher.

At six o'clock, Walter Wanger came to tell me that the costume problem wasn't solved, and probably wouldn't be for some time yet. I said I'd planned to leave Rome that day, and had stayed only because I didn't want Liz to feel that I was ignoring her, but that I had to leave the next morning. He made me promise I'd look Liz up the next time that I happened to be in Rome and she just happened to be making another picture there.

On the way back to my hotel, there were several other *Cleopatra* people in the limousine discussing that costume problem. It seems that, for a bathing scene, Liz had been working in the nude. Film was taken strictly from the back, and not far enough down, even at that, to upset anyone.

A studio photographer, however, had been roaming about the set, taking pictures from all angles. Everyone who saw the shots said later, according to a press dispatch, 'they were absolutely gorgeous', and there is no sane reason to doubt that.

Since it is now chic in Europe to publish nudes of the most respectable ladies, Liz consented to have the photographs released. But when word reached Eddie Fisher—and *that* was the main point of the story to me (where *was* Eddie Fisher for this news to have reached him?)—he blew up, in an untroublesome way, I assume, and demanded that the prints and negatives be given to him to destroy.

When I reached the hotel, the faithful public relations people were on the phone. They had finally located Eddie Fisher. He'd been in Paris all the time. They were letting me know first, they said. They'd tell Liz later.

If I wished to stop off there on my way back to New York, they'd continue to do their best to get us together. I said that wouldn't be necessary now because I felt that I had learned what Eddie Fisher was really like.

No trouble at all.

'Marlene Dietrich is not an actress like Sarah Bernhardt, she is a myth like Phryne'

ANDRE MALRAUX

THE BLUE ANGEL

by Richard Whitehall

To most of us—even those of us too young to have enjoyed its original fine careless rapture—she is primarily the gorgeous apparition of Lola-Lola, astride a chair, throatily curling that distinctive mezzo-baritone voice around the lyrics of

Falling in love again,
Never wanted to.
What am I to do?
Can't help it . . .

on, as Siegfried Kracauer remarks, 'a miniature stage so over-stuffed with props she herself seems part of the decor. Leggily composed into the chiaroscuro of Von Sternberg's deliberately sensuous compositions in her top hat, high heels and black tights, or flashing tantalising glimpses of frilly garters on a black-stockinged thigh, she was an inspiration to every photographer of suggestive postcards. Later, in *Morocco,* Von Sternberg was to push her eroticism to its utmost limits, and the androgynous vision of a tuxedoed and top-hatted Dietrich chanting a little French song, accompanied by highly suggestive gestures, almost qualifies it for a place of honour in an NFT season of pornographic films should they ever have the courage to mount one.

● *Above: 'The Blue Angel' (1930) directed by Josef von Sternberg 'is a fragment of social history, and the first violent explosion of sex in the sound cinema'*

The Blue Angel is a fragment of social history, and the first violent explosion of sex in the sound cinema. In it Dietrich is sexuality personified. 'This petty bourgeois Berlin tart, with her provocative legs and easy manners, showed an impassivity which incited one to grope for the secret behind her callous egoism and cool insolence. That such a secret existed was also intimated by her veiled voice which, when she sang about her interest in love-making and nothing else, vibrated with nostalgic reminiscences and smouldering hopes. Of course the impassivity never subsided and perhaps there was no secret at all'—Dietrich as a social phenomenon was examined by Kracauer in 'From Caligari to Hitler', her mythic qualities have been peddled by many others, but the enigma herself, quite indestructible, has survived all analysis with her secrets still intact and has lasted out these thirty years.

Dietrich is the last of the great exotics or, as Henry Hart once phrased it, 'our day's most convincing portrayer of the fly-catching flower that blooms in the night'. That hot-house elegance has inspired a multiplicity of rivals and imitations, but while Dietrich calmly surveys the passing of the years they are as dust in the wind. Of the earlier exotics Pola Negri is now a tantalising glimpse of twenties glamour while, even in her hey-day swanning around in things like *Purgatory's Ivory Angel*, only the least sophisticated could have been deceived by Theda Bara. A fateful crowding in of years has already subdued the lustre of later names such as Hedy Lamarr and Maria Montez, while Hollywood's last fling with that non-starter of the fifties, Bella Darvi, was errata rather than exotica. Lucia Bose alone possessed a beauty eloquent with self-communion, and is a possible cult-figure for the late seventies.

Like Garbo, a personality whom Dietrich extravagantly admires, she has a true and abiding glamour, not in the sense this most roughly-used of words has acquired of 'the influence of some charm causing things to appear fairer to the eye than they are', but taking it back to its turbulent Scottish origin of beauty touched with the eerie or the weird. There's no domesticated glamour about either Garbo or Dietrich; both seem to possess the Mona Lisa secret. This world-weary woman, the feminine of the Wandering Jew or the Flying Dutchman, who seems at home wherever a vengeful Destiny has been pleased to place her, in Morocco, Shanghai, Seville, Bottleneck, New Orleans, Chuck-a-Luck or—even—Berlin or back in history at Catherine's court of Petersburgh, has a peculiar mythic power in our restless century with its perpetual migrations of refugees. No wonder that old

mythomaniac, Cocteau, is one of her greatest admirers.

Technically speaking she is a presence rather than an actress, a great solo performer and perhaps the most self-centred of all motion picture beings. There is little of the to-and-fro of a proper acting relationship in a Dietrich film, for much of the time she neither acts nor reacts, thus the rather bitter remark by an actor who once played opposite her that 'we played all the scenes the way she wanted them'. Most of her rôles have been elaborately tailored to fit an image. When she did take over a rôle someone else had created it was to take a lively but not particularly successful stab at character in *Witness for the Prosecution* (even then we had Dietrich *en travestie* as a sailor singing to her own concertina accompaniment, and getting her bell-bottoms torn so that we might have a glimpse of the legendary legs—not one of flashback's happier interventions) nowhere near so good as Patricia Jessel's performance in the London—and New York—stage production.

A career that's spanned thirty years has, of course, thrown up much memorabilia: 'He was some sort of a man—what does it matter what you say about people', that epitaph of the crooked cop, Quinlan, spoken at the end of *Touch of Evil*, had a moving compassionate grace; the dying Frenchy wiping away the make-up and asking in a tremulous whisper, 'Aren't you going to kiss me good-bye, Tom?' brought a sudden stab of mortality to *Destry Rides Again;* the mysterious Madeliene of *Desire*, effortlessly bewitching a young American at a Spanish frontier post had a superb comic fastidiousness. There have been, too, such maniac moments as that high-heeled trek into the Sahara at the end of *Morocco*, while those who witnessed it remain forever seared with the memory of X27 in *Dishonoured* keeping a firing-squad waiting while she renews her lipstick.

The Dietrich legend has been assiduously cultivated, not least by Dietrich herself. No one has made a more searching enquiry into the mysteries of light, or can more carefully manage a position which throws into relief that subtle grace of bone structure against which age loses its significance ('While each shot is being lined up she has a full-length mirror set up beside the camera and is able to see just how she will look on the screen. If she thinks the light on her arms is too strong or her shoulders are catching too much from

● Left: '*Princess Olala*' (*1928*) *directed by Robert Land with Hans Albers was Dietrich's first leading role.* Above: '*Knight Without Armour*' (*1937*) *directed by Jacques Feyder, with Robert Donat,* '*Korda's attempt to resuscitate Dietrich's fading appeal*'

a certain arc she never hesitates to tell the cameraman—and she is always right'—Harry Stradling, who photographed her in *Knight Without Armour*). No-one has more carefully preserved that romantic *Weltzschmerz* rôle which is her contribution to the sociology of the screen.

Josef von Sternberg has been credited with the creation of the Dietrich myth, he—it is said—took the plump, comely Berliner and transformed her into the Circe of Southern california. 'Von Sternberg found me in Germany. I was nothing there. He believed in me, worked with me, trained me—he gave all his knowledge, experience, and energy to make me a success . . . he made me over', she once said in an interview. Some commentators of the late thirties presented Von Sternberg as a sort of Dracula, sucking all the talent from Dietrich. Later it became popular to reverse the accusation and present Dietrich as the parasite on his talent. It's a fascinating but fruitless topic on which to speculate, but probably Richard Griffiths' theory that 'he used her as box-office bait so that he might pursue his strange, compulsive preoccupation with pictorial composition' is fairly close to the truth. Certainly he turned Dietrich, during the six years of their partnership, into the most expensive set-decoration in film history and she responded whole-heartedly, so that their last collaboration, *The Devil is a Woman*, is still her favourite film because 'I was more beautiful in that than anything else'.

The rich, sensuous allure of the Von Sternberg films suited her highly decadent eroticism as surely and beautifully as the calyx suits its flower. His demands and her acquiescence went far beyond the normal actress-director

relationship, and the care he spent over each of her set-ups has become legendary. They tell, in muted whispers, that he once demanded 68 retakes on a scene in which Dietrich had to blow out a candle and quiver her nostrils simultaneously. Like most Von Sternberg stories this is most probably apochryphal but the man who could, years later, comment that 'though my films have been, and still are, studied by directors here and abroad I regard them only as reasonably arrogant gestures of mine . . . they don't carry my endorsement, they only carry my name' worked in an atmosphere where anything was possible.

When Von Sternberg cast her as Lola-Lola in *The Blue Angel* over the protests of UFA chief Erich Pommer—who wanted Lucie Mannheim—he was not remoulding an actress into a mythic image, he was giving an embryo a chance of unstunted life. Already when *Ich Kusse Ihre Hande, Madame* had opened in Berlin early in 1929 a leading picture magazine, the *Berliner Illustriete Zietung*, had come out with a split cover, one half illustrating Garbo and the other devoted to Garbo's newest rival, Marlene Dietrich. It has also been claimed by those lucky enough to see it that her next film, *Die Frau, Nach der Man Sich Sehnt*, adapted from a Max Brod novel, contained every aspect of the Dietrich personality later to become familiar.

She had starred in at least three films and had rôles of varying importance in several others before that fateful meeting with Von Sternberg. There is no accurate listing of her early films. Those two massive Italian compendiums both include Pabst's *Joyless Street* among her early films, but several viewings of this film have never produced Dietrich or anyone who looks remotely like her. The star herself has been curiously reticent about those early years. Arthur Knight in his 'Notes on a living Legend' (Films in Review, December, 1954) quotes an account of a press conference in which someone asked her about her pre-Von Sternberg films: '"I never made any films before *The Blue Angel*", she replied. "But what about . . ." "I *said*, I never made any films before *The Blue Angel*", reiterated Miss Deitrich with unmistakable emphasis'. To Dietrich then, the Dietrich legend dates from 1st April, 1930 (hardly an auspicious date for the inauguration of a legend) when *The Blue Angel* had its world premiere in Berlin.

During their legendary association, which often covered the process of film-making from initial script preparation to final cut, they each made only one film without the other. Von Sternberg took over *An American Tragedy* from Eisenstein and Dietrich—on Von Sternberg's advice—appeared in *Song of Songs* under Rouben Mamoulian's direction. Garbo was, notoriously, a difficult actress to direct but the three directors who worked with both Garbo and Dietrich achieved finer results with the Swedish star. Mamoulian went on from *Song of Songs* to direct one of Garbo's most glowing romantic performances —perhaps her greatest—in *Queen Christina*. Garbo's deep stillness in the court scenes of *The Kiss* (in which, incidentally, she laughs a good ten years before 'Garbo Laughs' became the selling point on *Ninotchka*) outdoes anything Dietrich achieved under Feyder's direction in *Knight Without Armour;* while

● *'Flame of New Orleans' (1941) directed by Rene Clair 'demonstrating that Dietrich's comic gifts have never been fully explored'*

Angel or even *Desire* (directed by Frank Borzage under Lubitsch's personal supervision) have nothing like the comic smoothness of *Ninotchka*.

After *The Devil is a Woman* Von Sternberg announced that 'Fraulein Dietrich and I have progressed as far as possible together. My being with Dietrich any further will not help her or me. If we continued we would get into a pattern that would be helpful to neither of us'. Actually there had been mounting criticism for several years. *Shanghai Express* and *Blonde Venus* had been great popular successes, but *The Scarlet Empress* and the extravagant fantasy of *The Devil is a Woman* had been disastrous failures both with critics and public. Dietrich, once Paramount's most valuable star property, had become something of a problem, her public obviously yearning for a change of pace. Neither managed to shake the other's influence entirely; Von Sternberg went on to direct Marian Marsh in *Crime and Punishment* and, much later (after an abortive experiment with that wonderful study in still-life, Hedy Lamarr) Gene Tierney in *The Shanghai Gesture* into performances patterned after the Dietrich prototype, while Dietrich's subsequent directors tried to live up to Von Sternberg's idealisation of her beauty. She could still, in October of last year, refer to Von Sternberg as 'the man I wanted to please most'.

Lubitsch didn't jettison too much of the familiar Dietrich manner in *Desire*. He merely provided a good reason for the enigma (she was a jewel thief), a number of good comic opportunities in the first half before the story took a dimly-dramatic reformative turn, and gave Dietrich an opportunity to choose her wardrobe to match her car (white costume for a jazzy low-slung sports model, sheathed in black for a limousine, and so on). But *The Garden of Allah* flung her back into the worst excesses of her Von Sternberg period. Even worse, it handled a highly coloured nonsense-novelette in a parody of the Von Sternberg manner while her playing of Domini Enfilden, in love with a Trappist monk who has broken his vows, had a cold, unearthly, moonlight quality entirely divorced from human contact. Rarely has she achieved a more perfect waxen beauty (it's another of her personal favourites) and even a recent TV revival, although it denies us that beauty of early Technicolour which is the film's chief asset, provides one with a restful progression of images and the enjoyment some people get from watching tropical fish. The final confession in the desert and the parting outside the monastery gates touch, in Christopher Fry's memorable line, 'the height of depth'.

Knight Without Armour, Korda's attempt to resuscitate Dietrich's fading appeal, holds up rather better than most of her vehicles from this period, and she certainly lives up to James Hilton's description of his heroine, as 'calm, exquisitely dignified, she accepted favours and humiliations alike with slightly mocking nonchalance'. Countess Andraxine provides Dietrich with some enjoyable moments, particularly the opening sequences where an awakening Countess finds herself mysteriously alone in a mansion deserted by the servants. She moves, ethereally beautiful in floating white draperies, through the house and grounds until a horde of invading peasants—its a story of the 1917 Revolution—sweep over the brow of a hill to menace the Countess as she stands, calm and dignified, beside a lake.

If her Denham adventure proved unhappy box-office, *Angel* hurried her on down the road to oblivion at a cracking pace. Cast as Lady Maria Barker, the wife of an English diplomat, her performance had rather less to do with acting then with taxidermy. Not a

flicker of emotion disturbed the carefully posed profile, passivity personified. She obviously had no intention of soiling herself in emotional contact with her role, spending most of her time 'raising and lowering at intervals artificial eyelashes you could hang a hat on' as Theodore Huff cruelly but justly remarked. The liveliest moment (indeed the only one I can recall with any clarity) held Dietrich in a long tracking shot as she left her car and walked right through the ground floor of her London home, meticulously timed in that the camera remained outside picking her up at intervals through the windows. *Angel* marked the final split between Dietrich and Paramount, to whom she had been under contract since 1930. Her studio, having failed with the original, now began to build their Italian contractee, Isa Miranda, into a 'second Dietrich' via rôles which looked remarkably like Dietrich rejects (*Hotel Imperial*, *Adventure in Diamonds*) but this 'second Dietrich' was no luckier than the first.

Retirement rumours were in the air. Dietrich left Hollywood for Europe. On 4th May, 1938, that famous red-bordered advertisement sponsored by the Independent Theatre Owners Association of New York appeared in the *Hollywood Reporter* labelling Dietrich and a pot-pourri of other star names 'box-office poison'. Had it not been for Joseph Pasternak she might now be an interesting curiosity of the thirties rather than a living legend of the sixties. He believed in her, just as Von Sternberg had done and, more important, he gave her two of the best rôles she ever had just at the moment she most needed them.

Dietrich in a western was considered bizarre casting at the time but it worked superbly, and *Destry Rides Again* is still one of the great adventures in the *genre*. Unhampered by excessive stylisation, uninhibitedly in character, she retained her glamour (it survived, triumphantly, an Amazonian battle with Una Merkel and a dousing from an eight-gallon container of water) but, as the popular entertainer in the 'Long Chance' saloon in the frontier town of Bottleneck, forgot her obsession with appearances long enough to give her best performance in almost a decade, a Lola-Lola without the heavy Teutonic overones:

Tom Destry (*who has called to 'apologise for not knowing who is the real boss of Bottleneck'*) . . . You don't only sing at the 'Long Chance' saloon—you take part in crooked poker games and cheat folk out of their ranches.

Frenchy: Who said that?

Destry: It's just a rumour—same as it's said you're working for that smug-faced boss of the 'Long Chance', Mr. Kent—no, don't mistake me—this coffee cup I'm holding, I wouldn't like it spilt on my lap would I?

Frenchy: Just what are you getting at?

Destry: Well, when hot coffee's spilt accidentally—as it were—in your lap you don't know what may happen. Cards get lost . . .

and Destry's final line as he parts from an angry Frenchy: 'I—I bet you've got a lovely face under all that paint. Why don't you wipe it off some day and have a good look? Figure out how you can live up to it'.

Dietrich may not be a great actress in any accepted meaning of the term, but once she's folded her personality around a rôle it becomes impossible for others to follow her, as Mari Blanchard found when *Destry* was remade in 1955, and as May Britt discovered a year or two later when fate and Fox, casting her as Lola-Lola, effortlessly wrecked her career.

From the old west to the South Pacific and back to more familiar territory:

'*What's your name?*'

'Bijou—to my friends!'

'*Deported! Health A1 Doesn't seem to be an island from which you haven't been told to get out. Why?*'

'I'm a torch singer. Can I help when I'm on the job if the boys go crazy over me and fight?'

The brawls are, in fact, the best part of *Seven Sinners* (the title, like *The Blue Angel* is taken from the cabaret where the heroine sings) although Dietrich, part-Frenchy part-Sadie Thompson, took time off from roistering with American sailors to put over one of her best songs 'I've Been in Love Before'. The story had Dietrich in her sacrificial mood, giving John Wayne—in a rôle designed for Tyrone Power—back to the US Navy. As a frame for Dietrich's particular talents it held nothing special, but her *desinvolture* playing in the last of the Pasternak trilogy is a high-spot in a variable career.

'I'm going back to New Orleans', Frenchy threatened at one point in *Destry Rides Again* (years later the flamboyant progress of Altar Keene had its starting point in that same Tennessee Williams haunted city) and under Rene Clair's direction she was *The Flame of New Orleans* to perfection. Claire Ledoux is a delicious comic fragment demonstrating (as *Desire* had done, and *The Lady is Willing* was later to do) that Dietrich's comedic gifts have never been fully explored. Like that other New Orleans enchantress whom Ingrid Bergman was to impersonate so successfully in *Saratoga Trunk*, Claire Ledoux makes a play for money (in this case a wealthy banker delightfully played by Roland Young) but settles for love (Bruce Cabot as a ship's captain).

This elegant frolic is one of Clair's most stylish tributes to woman regnant while Dietrich's performance is, I think, the most stylish she was ever to give and, as for looking beautiful (which seems to be the criterion by which she judges her films) she has rarely been more flawlessly photographed than by Rudolph Mate or more superbly gowned than by Rene Hubert. No wonder this vision of Parisian elegance had all the wealthy burghers of America's most fascinating city at her feet.

Although authentically Clair, this is one of the least remarked of his films. 'Ironically, the success of *Destry*, and Marlene's personal popularity as the brawling beer hall hostess almost wrecked Dietrich's career. Apparently all her new employers at Universal could see was a sleazy, sexy hussy for strong men to fight over. In *Flame of New Orleans*, Rene Clair's first American film, Dietrich was handled a bit more stylishly than in the others but a pattern had been established', wrote Arthur Knight in his retrospect of her career. Time has a bad habit of dimming the memory, but the triple-threat of Dietrich's playing in this extravaganza of the 1850's was anything but sleazy, and deserves some sort of remembrance.

Claire, the type of European fascinator every good American has been warned against, has to pose as an unworldly Countess in order to win Giraud, the banker, and still the suspicions of his family, trilling sentimental songs about the flowers in May at stuffy family evenings at home. Out driving one afternoon a sailor's pet monkey gets his lead entangled in the wheel of her carriage and, when she refuses to stop, there's a foam of petticoats as the sailor turns her carriage over. Claire begins to haunt a sailor's dive, the tough 'Oyster Bed Cafe' in the hope of seeing him again and, when rumours of her indiscretions reach the Giraud family, hurriedly invents—and impersonates—a wicked flaunt of a cousin to explain the stories away. Dietrich having rows with herself through the bedroom before flouncing, in the character of the cousin, past a perplexed Roland Young, or fainting gracefully through a near-catastrophe of revelations had great subtlety, and the final moments (Dietrich kidnapped during her wedding ceremony) round off a rare and exquisite Franco-American fairytale with charm and precision.

At this point Pasternak left Universal for MGM leaving Dietrich and that other star he had so beautifully moulded, Deanna Durbin to flounder helplessly. What followed for Dietrich was certainly a decline, not at first too marked but later gathering an increased momentum. Warner Brothers put Dietrich amongst the high tension wires as George Raft and Edward G Robinson battled for her favours in *Manpower*, an enjoyable, entirely unbelievable, romp in which she is first discovered in a clip joint. Mitchell Leisen's *The Lady is Willing* restored her to sophisticated comedy as Elizabeth Madden, Broadway's most eccentric star—her eccentricity consisting chiefly of a thwarted mother love and a passion for borrowing other people's babies and wearing the most *outré* of hats. This was, for most of the time, acceptable light relief but, like *Desire*, it foundered on a highly charged dramatic ending with the near-death of her adopted son.

The fourth remake of Rex Beach's *The Spoilers* (which has since notched up its fifth, with Anne Baxter as Cherry Malotte) had her back in the gin palaces, this time in the Yukon of the nineties. The highspot in both this one and her next, *Pittsburgh*, is the brawling partnership of John Wayne and Randolph

Scott—indeed her rôle in *Pittsburgh* seemed to have been added almost as an afterthought. Wisely she decided to retire from the saloon circuit and, apart from being sawn in half by Orson Welles in *Follow the Boys*, a rather dreary musical, and an unexpected shot at Eastern fantasy, *Kismet*, which displayed the famous legs gold painted for a dance sequence, she disappeared from films until the war had ended.

For three years she toured the various battle fronts paying, for most of the time, her own expenses. This 'little show' as she called it was one of the most magnificent entertainment enterprises of the war, and she was decorated by both the American and the French governments. Her film career resumed in Paris in 1946. The original intention had been that she and Jean Gabin, potentially an explosive combination, should appear in Carne's *Les Portes de la Nuit* but, while Dietrich liked the subject, she didn't care much for the rôle of Malou. When Prevert and Carne refused to change the script she and Gabin withdrew into the second best of *Martin Roumagnac*. If the Carne film, in which she was replaced by the Franco-Russian actress, Nathalie Nattier—a very Dietrich-type blonde—disappointed when it was eventually released, so did *Martin Roumagnac*. Blanche Ferrand '*l'object de jalousie et de la detestation des femmes*' has had affairs with practically every eligible man in the provincial city of Clairval—her accent is explained away by a long period in Australia—until she is loved, and eventually killed, by Gabin. It's a slow, obvious, and slightly ridiculous film.

A scheduled film with Raimu had to be abandoned when that great character actor died, and Dietrich found herself back in Hollywood at her old studio, Paramount, playing a gipsy in a remarkable farrago of nonsense, *Golden Earrings*, in which she was 'just a child of nature—fierce, passionate, unwashed'. But her playing of Erika in Billy Wilder's *A Foreign Affair* is as good as anything she's ever done.

Causing a certain upset in 1948 by reason of that old question-mark on Wilder films, questionable taste, the film has shaken free of contemporary doubts and its cynicism in the Berlin rubble strikes an intensely period note. Dietrich's two songs, particularly 'Black Market Song', were described as tasteless, but a Brechtian age certainly should have taken them in its stride, and the *Daily Worker* voiced other objections. 'There is naturally a certain amount of anti-Soviet propaganda implied, reaching a high-spot when Marlene says "You can imagine what it was like to be a woman when the Russians entered Berlin". Poor Marlene! What a relief it must have been when the Yanks arrived'. Apparently so biased was this critic he forgot to mention that Wilder placed his barbs with equal ferocity plumb in the centre of the war-medals of both Russians and Americans—this picture of a ribald soldiery could hardly have sent the State Department into raptures.

These controversies die down and are forgotten. Dietrich brought all her *fin-de-siecle* fascination to the playing of a Nazi high-official's girl friend, exploring her own wardrobe for clothes to drape Erika in a slightly faded glamour, explaining that this night-club singer would always be well-dressed in the expensive clothes she had carefully preserved through the war.

Since 1948 her appearances have been sporadic and not always successful. An attractive red-herring in Hitchcock's *Stage Fright*, a fading actress in *No Highway*, and then the flaming vision of Altar Keene in that fantasia on a Western theme, *Rancho Notorious*. Altar, first glimpsed in scarlet and black with her blonded hair pulled back into a ponytail, astride a human mount in a saloon-bar obstacle race; entirely in heliotrope behind a pair of milk-white horses ('She was a glory girl in those days', a character wistfully remarks); that unforgettable glimpse of Altar singing 'How could she leave her baby, how could she leave bed and board' while dangling a cigarette from the side of her mouth, eventually dropping it into a half-filled whiskey glass; swathed in black net at the gambling tables ('What did you think I was—a pipe dream?' she asks at one point); carrying her chuck-a-luck winnings home in a borrowed handkerchief, or climbing out of a black dress that was more a feat of engineering than an example of *haute couture*. Altar Keene is one of the most gorgeous collections of screen-snapshots to have been assembled together in one frame.

During those years of the middle fifties several projects came to nothing. She was, for instance, announced for another Billy Wilder subject to be called *Thirty Pieces of Silver*, but this, like a trip to Spain for *Confidential Report*, did not materialise on the screen. That Dietrich-De Sica comedy was a sad disappointment, but her bravura playing of Tana, that dark-wigged cigar-smoking madame of a Mexican bordello, hung around with more cheap baubles than a Christmas tree, was an entirely enjoyable interlude. Most recent has been the guest appearance in Kramer's *Judgment at Nuremburg* as Mrs. Bertholt, the widow of an executed Nazi general ('What did he know about the crimes they cited him for . . . he became part of the revenge which the victors always take on the vanquished'), and she has just recently recorded the narration for *The Black Fox*, a documentary about Hitler.

Not a great actress—that is likely to be the verdict of history—but a purely manufactured screen personality would never have held a place in the sun for so long. That sudden resurgence of the Dietrich legend which dates from Las Vegas in 1953 has little or nothing to do with that almost invisible bodice or a stalactite of rhinestones, these are merely the gimmicks an age of gimmickry has come to expect, but a great basic talent as a *diseuse*—it's the description she herself applies to this specialised art. She can, like Garland, so touch a song with her own particular magic it becomes her property. The Dietrich legend, for instance, achieves its greatest lustre through the music of Frederick Hollander and those wry, worldly songs which suit her to perfection; the peak moments in her career are not the purely visual or the purely verbal but when she marries the two through her music (like all great artists she needs to be seen as well as heard), that 'off-key rambling'. as one unsympathetic critic once described it.

Hollander (who could be glimpsed accompanying her on the piano in *A Foreign Affair*) is to Dietrich what Kurt Weill was to Lotte Lenya, the provider of the basic raw material from which art can be spun. Would, I wonder, *The Blue Angel* have had the same impact without its Hollander songs, would Dietrich have become a legend had she not sung *Ich Bin Von Kopf Bin Fuss*? It took a sympathetic mentor, Pasternak, to realise that Dietrich without Hollander was the vital ingredient lacking in her Paramount films, so in came Hollander to write 'See What the Boys in the Backroom Will Have' and 'Little Joe' for *Destry Rides Again* and 'I've Been in Love Before' for *Seven Sinners*. 'Illusions' and 'Black Market Song' complement the Dietrich personality in *A Foreign Affair* and it was, perhaps, the lack of Hollander songs that kept *Rancho Notorious* well this side of greatness. Even thefting from another singer she can put her mark on a song, so that her *sprechtunsong* of 'Lili Marlene' turns this barrack-square ballad into one of the great love-lyrics of the forties.

As an actress she lacks, perhaps, a true and natural eloquence, as a cabarettist she is one of the great ones of our age. The light-years of our stars are numbered small indeed, but in her natural sphere Dietrich's particular bright star has an undimming radiance.

● Far left: '*Stage Fright*' (*1950*) *directed by Alfred Hitchcock gave Dietrich no greater part than* '*an attractive red-herring*' Left: '*Touch of Evil*' (*1958*) *directed by Orson Welles, and starring Orson Welles and Marlene Dietrich. For Dietrich,* '*moving compassionate grace*'

THE PAY OFF

Although the National Film Finance Corporation's share in the profits of British films last year reached the record level of £323,952, the Corporation must still cope with an annual rate of loss averaging £107,500. Inevitably during 1963 the Corporation will be more selective in the kind of films it helps to finance.

We believe this may be a good thing for British production. Mr John Terry, the managing director of the Corporation, has stated that primarily his organisation exists to help producers make *profitable* films. He added, however, that his concern is that support should be given to such pictures as *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and not to the kind of film that aims at an entertainment level roughly equivalent to that provided by television.

The result of this policy is enough to give a heart attack to the manager of any commercial bank. After the profits made by Woodfall Films with *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* the company set up its other productions, notably *A Taste of Honey* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* without the help of the NFFC. As a result, the Corporation is deprived of its share in the profits on films made by a production group it initially helped to establish. Mr Terry has said this is a situation he and his colleagues accept as part of their function as a Government financing organisation.

If this is so, there is a situation the Government should accept as readily. No bank can have a very good chance in such a speculative business of remaining solvent. The Board of Trade should at once stop taking interest on 'dead' money (that is, the money the Corporation has lost): and the Government should give urgent attention to the affairs of the NFFC. If its work is to properly encourage the best then more public money should be put its way.

Italian and French film makers enjoy large Government subsidies. If British films are to be culturally their equal, British film makers need some kind of 'prize' for quality; and the NFFC, with its experience in the economics of British film making, would be the best organisation to administer such aid.

I have on my desk an advertisement sent me by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in London to promote the film of Nabokov's book *Lolita*. The advertisement, printed in the United States, uses the slogan: 'For persons over 18 years of age'. Yet the film has an X certificate issued by the British Board of Film Censors, permitting it to be seen by adolescents of 16. I asked the film company if it intends to keep out young persons between 16 and 18 from the British cinemas where the film is shown. Apparently not.

I asked the British Board of Film Censors if it will revise its certificate in view of the film company's own admission that it considers the film suitable 'for persons over 18 years of age'? Apparently not.

Some readers have taken me to task for suggesting in this column in July that films intended for 'adult audiences' should be seen only by adult audiences, and that the raising of the age level for X certificate films from 16 to 18 or 21 years is long overdue. Now we are faced with the spectacle of a film company itself circulating a statement that its film is for persons over 18—and positively no one seems prepared to do anything about it.

Monroe fade out

I saw Marilyn Monroe at as many press conferences as most journalists and I was always impressed by her spontaneous wit and sincerity. One can be as sincere about being a sex symbol as a Juliet.

The popular press made headlines from the fact that she found acting difficult and men attractive. They often overlooked the quality of her performances in films like *The Seven Year Itch* and *Some Like it Hot*. She was one of the few really great comediennes, not because she was an intellectual (although she was more intelligent than most 'dizzy blondes') but because she had the great gift of not taking herself, or her sex seriously.

Monroe's tragic death—an overdose of sleeping tablets, alone, aged 36—is more than the end of a sex symbol. It marks for all time the consequences of the great social disease of our age—the all pervading loneliness of the world's 'symbols'.

Tact and Lola-Lola

Which star has the most tact? My Rome correspondent, John Francis Lane, thinks it may be Marlene Dietrich. He met her recently in Sicily . . . in the hotel lounge where Antonioni had Claudia surprise Sandro necking in *L'Avvenuta*. Sample of the Lane-Dietrich conversation:

Lane: What is the secret of staying young?
Dietrich: I'm not so old.
Lane: Would you play Lola-Lola today if the part were offered you?
Dietrich: No. I never really liked the part. I hate playing vulgar women.
Lane: What do you think of the recent film of *The Blue Angel*?
Dietrich: What everyone thinks.

Lane himself might qualify as the most tactful journalist. He prepared the English language version of Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*. Now he is working with Fellini during the secret filming of Fellini's new picture. The Italian *dolce vita* newshounds, I gather, are bitter that Lane is the only inside man. But Lane was 'outside' not so long ago. He had been cast by Mankiewicz to play Bacchus (there's type casting for you!) in a

scene in *Cleopatra*. When Elizabeth Taylor and Eddie Fisher became estranged, producer Walter Wanger decided he wanted no journalists around—even acting journalists. So Lane was paid off, technically for being too tall for the part.

Caged

Last month Arthur Christiansen, former London *Daily Express* editor, described his difficulties in becoming an actor for *The Day the Earth Caught Fire*. In Russia they have a similar problem. They have been trying to make an animal trainer act.

Margarita Nazarova, an animal trainer, has been playing the lead in a Lenfilm production, *Striped Voyagers*, which is about a Soviet ship's captain given the task of taking twenty tigers from Ceylon to the USSR for the Moscow zoo.

Says Nazarova about her part: 'All my doubts and anxieties were concerned with my acting. As an animal-trainer I wasn't worried about the tigers. But we actors had a hard time. There were hardly any repeat shots, for it is extremely difficult to make an animal do the same thing over again. We had to react instantly to unexpected developments, improvised by the animals and not in the script at all. When the shooting-signal was given animals and people would change places at once. The tigers would come out on to the deck while the people went into the cages.'

Star maker

Darryl F Zanuck is the man who built the 20th Century-Fox empire in the 'thirties. As production chief he was responsible for the making of classics such as *The House of Rothschild*, *Clive of India* and *Les Miserables*. He created the strongest team of stars Hollywood had ever known—among them, Tyrone Power, Betty Grable, Alice Faye, and Don Ameche. After the Second World War he changed. He became personally involved in filming, with such remarkably outspoken subjects as *Pinky*, *All About Eve* and *Viva Zapata*! Other people took over the production control of Fox, and most of its former glory faded, albeit not so rapidly as some of the other Hollywood giants.

Now Zanuck is back. He has been appointed president of the board and Spyros Skouras, president for the past twenty years, has been designated chairman. It was Skouras who

tried to revive a jaded, television-battered Hollywood with Cinemascope and stereophonic sound. I wonder what formula Zanuck will try?

I believe Zanuck will concentrate more on content than techniques and new methods of selling. All his life he has *made* films. It is the job he can best do. His latest film, *The Longest Day*, will have its premiere in October. Six internationally famous directors, including Zanuck himself, have reconstructed D-Day, June 6, 1944. Zanuck writes about his film in the November *films and filming;* and his article will give some clues to the future of his regained Hollywood empire.

Profit

If you were investing money in British films, which films of recent years do you think would show you the most profit? I can tell you the ten most profitable for the National Film Finance Corporation. They were *Carry on Nurse, The Colditz Story, Dentist in the Chair, Expresso Bongo, Happy is the Bride, I'm All Right Jack, League of Gentlemen, Sapphire, Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and *Tiger Bay*. Last year —in that order—they earned £323,952 for the corporation as its share in their profits.

But you could make a very nasty mistake. Last year the NFFC had to provide for £219,531 losses on loans made to film producers.

Seven arts

There are two Seven Arts in Britain. The magazine, published by Hansom Books, and the film company that in little more than a year has proved that films of quality are not always the films that lose money.

Ray Stark, the American vice-president in charge of production, made a claim when he was in London recently that Seven Arts 'has the greatest programme of production of any company in film history'. I usually take that kind of comment from film men with a large pinch of salt. But I have been looking into the claim.

In Britain alone Seven Arts is making, or about to start: Alexander Mackendrick's *Sammy Going South*, produced by Sir Michael Balcon; *The Small Sad World of Sammy Lee*, with Anthony Newley and directed by Ken Hughes; Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, with Peter Sellers; Tennessee Williams' *The Night of the Iguana;* Brendan Behan's *The Hostage*, which Robert Rossen wants to direct; a new version of Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, to star Laurence Harvey; and *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*, with Katharine Hepburn, the first of three films for Seven Arts to be directed by John Huston.

Seven Arts first made international news with the filming of *Lolita*, which has now opened in London.

● *The man who photographed Mary Pickford in her great silent pictures, Charles Rosher, has returned to Britain—for a holiday. Rosher was born in Britain, started life as a still photographer and went to the United States in 1909. He is a founder member of the American Society of Cinematographers. Before he retired, Rosher lit the musical 'Kiss Me Kate'. In the picture he is seen (right) with Herbert Lom at Pinewood on the set of Walt Disney's new comedy 'The Horse Without a Head', directed by Don Chaffey*

● *Soviet film-makers are taking themselves less seriously. A Russian film magazine, 'Soviet Film' this month contains an article on acting with animals—illustrated by cartoons that suggest the film men don't always know how to take a lion by the tail. See—Caged*

Empty sink

Carol Reed, making his new film *The Running Man* in Spain, has been hitting out at 'kitchen sink' pictures. He is quoted as saying: 'We are making moving pictures and not photographing stage plays. The audience should always be asking "What's round the next corner?" and if they can watch good artists in dramatic situations with colourful backgrounds in a way of life they may never experience for themselves, why should we drag them to the cinema to look for an hour or two at a kitchen sink, a one-set film, the greasy dishes and the mental and moral miasma of certain elements in society?'

Reed overlooks one thing. Audiences pay to see films that appeal to them. They are not 'dragged' to the cinema.

I looked up the publicity handout about Reed's new film. It says: 'An insurance fraud, a change of identity, a beautiful girl, a man on the run, an ironic twist and a magnificent chase are the ingredients . . .' I hope audiences don't have to be 'dragged' to the cinema to see that.

David Harum

Who is David Harum? Nearly three hundred American critics were given the task of picking 'The Fourteen Greatest American Motion Pictures'. They were wanted for the Seattle World's Fair, where the fourteen films have been seen by visitors at morning and afternoon showings every seven days.

The films chosen are: *Birth of a Nation, The Gold Rush, Anna Christie, All Quiet on the Western Front, I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang, It Happened One Night, David Harum, Wuthering Heights, The Wizard of Oz, Gone With the Wind, Citizen Kane, Sunset Boulevard, Shane* and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers.*

Thirteen of the films are well known. But *David Harum* is a new name to me. I asked six London critics if they had heard of it. None had. Even the British Film Institute had to dig a record card from the files to recall the title. It was directed by James Cruze in 1934, with Will Rogers and Louise Dressler in the cast. Comment from the B.F.I. librarian: 'Extraordinary that nearly three hundred critics should know about it, let alone have *seen* it'.

Eleven of the films chosen were made before the Second World War. Who said that movies are getting better than ever?

Cuttings

Today it's bowling and bingo; skating and skiing; concerts and coffee bars. It's a swinging, twisting, guitar plucking, exhaust-popping coke-swilling era. It's the time of the hep, the cool, the trad and the pop. And if we don't get with it Daddy-O, we're dead.—Peter King, chairman of the London and Home Counties branch of the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association, in *Kine. Weekly.*

On one memorable occasion a rebuffed fan snapped: 'Who the hell do you think you are?' Cary Grant, cool as the north wind, answered: 'I know who I am. I haven't the vaguest idea who you are, and furthermore I don't care to know.'

—*Time magazine*

casting against type, having John Le Mesurier as a working-class character—very daring. All the minor characters are as stale as railway station buns.

Val Guest tries very hard to get a sense of movement into a talkative script; he gets a bit zoom-happy at times and goes in for finicky continuity devices, even raking up the corniest cliché from the textbooks of film Art—a woman screams, cut to an engine-whistle. The opening pan over a caravan site crackles with high-tension gloom and foreboding and promised much more bite and truth. It's not a badly made film at all, but it's not a very exciting one either.

RAYMOND DURGNAT

RENDEZ-VOUS AT MIDNIGHT

Written and directed by Roger Leenhardt. Produced by Jean Thuillier. Director of photography, Jean Badal. Music, Georges Auric. Editor, Henri Lanoe. A Les Editions Cinegraphiques—Argos Films—Les Films Roger Leenhardt production, distributed by Sebricon. French. English sub-titles. Original title: *Le Rendez-vous de Minuit*. Cert. X. 90 mins.

Anne Leuven/Eva Kroly, LILLI PALMER; *Jacques Moreau*, MICHEL AUCLAIR; *Bob*, JOSE LUIS DE VILALLONGA; *Pierre Neyris*, MAURICE RONET; *Doctor*, JEAN GALLAND; *Jaqueline*, ALEXANDRA STEWART; *Maria*, LUCIENNE LE MARCHAND; and *Gianino*, MICHEL DE RE.

With Auriol, Astruc and Bazin, Leenhardt was one of the quartet of writers who after the war renovated French film criticism—he was responsible for the battle cry 'Down with Ford, long live Wyler'. In 1946 he embarked on his present career as a producer of short films; *Le Rendez-vous de Minuit* is his first feature since *Les Derniers Vacances* (1948), a delicate study of schoolchildren's love, which in some ways anticipated the New Wave.

Le Rendez-vous de Minuit bears all the marks of its author's finesse and intelligence. A journalist in a cinema sees a woman beside him strangely moved by the romance proceeding on the screen. She explains that in the heroine's story she sees her own, and that, modelling her destiny on that of the heroine, she intends to kill herself at midnight. Between the comfortably happy journalist and the desperate girl, a talented but unsuccessful actress, a strangers' intimacy arises; the progress of their friendship during the next 90 minutes is contrasted with the course of events in the film. Art and reality merge in the last reel. The screen heroine's drive to her rendezvous with suicide is intercut with the 'real' hero's race to the same location in Paris to avert the actress'. Both women are played by Lilli Palmer. The failed actress' envy of the star's success has a wistful humour; and in the last reel, Lilli Palmer appears, as herself.

Does art imitate nature, or nature imitate art? From Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* to Jean Renoirs' play *Orvet*, the question has fascinated modern artists. It seems to symbolise the self-consciousness of our age. Leenhardt contrasts the novelettish clichés of the 'inner' film with the actress's 'real' story, but this is only the simplest level of the relationship between art and life. Simply because the actress sees herself in the film, its clichés must express some sort of truth; and real-life too has its contrivances, its novelettish moments. *Le Rendez-vous de Minuit* has something of the cheerful sadness of *Lola*—fans can also enjoy the *Lola* parlour-game of 'spotting the references' to other films (there are several, I am glad to say, to one of my favourites, *Les Amants de Verone*).

As the screen heroine, Lilli Palmer achieves perfectly the most difficult of feats, a graceful self-parody; and as the discouraged and lonely Eva she reveals, at moments, the depth of Celia Johnson in *Brief Encounter*. As in Becker's films (of which this is often reminiscent) Leenhardt lavishes care on the least gesture of the smallest part—there is a delightful study of a café waiter serving cognac, and later, a beautifully sustained and subtle sketch of a young glamourpuss listening to a discussion between two highbrow film critics. Michel Auclair's journalist is an intriguing mixture of sensitive and seducer.

For all his intelligence, Leenhardt does not always convince us that his real-life story is real. The street scene—freshly staged as it is—is one sequence where contrivance shows through. The brief encounter between the two people does not leave the range of 'elegant sadness' reminiscent of pre-war Duvivier and of Leenhard's favourite playwright, Jean Giraudoux. If you accept Giraudoux and Anouilh as important artists, you may find this film important too; but even if you don't, you will probably enjoy its gentle wit, its visual elegance and its warmth. RAYMOND DURGNAT

CRY DOUBLE CROSS

Directed by Alfred Weidenmann. Produced by Luggi Waldleitner. Screenplay by Herbert Reinecker. Director of photography, Kurt Hasse. Edited by Lilian Seng. Music by Hans-Martin Majewski. A Luggi Waldleitner-Roxy Production. German. Gala release. Original title, *Boomerang*. Dubbed English version. Cert. U. 65 mins. Original running time, 93 mins.

Robert Wegner, HARDY KRUGER; *Police Commissioner Stern*, MARTIN HELD; *Georg Kugler*, MARIO ADORF; *Willy Schneider*, HORST FRANK; and *Else*, INGRID VAN BERGEN.

Robert Wegner, with his associates Georg Kugler and Willy Schneider, plan a not-too-difficult safe breaking. All goes well until Willy Schneider, convinced Wegner is two-timing him with his girl Else, informs on them. The raid is interrupted by the police and Wegner desperately shoots his way out, fatally wounds a detective and himself receives a wound in the thigh. In the pursuit party is Chief Commissioner Stern, whose life was saved by Wegner in the war, and Stern tries to prevent Wegner from incriminating himself further. But Wegner pays no heed and presses on with his hopeless escape bid until, trapped by his pursuers, he opens fire in a final gesture of defiance. Police bullets tear into Wegner, killing him quickly and brutally in the glare of the searchlights.

Cry Double Cross is practically two films in one. Film No. 1, from the opening until the attempted larceny, is principally concerned with the curiously sexless Robert/Willy/Else relationship. Film No 2, post-larceny part, deals with the effect that Wegner's war-time heroism has on Stern's attitude during the chase. This clumsily contrived twist is really a bit too much but having swallowed it, I found the film took on a deeper, more personal tone which was not allowed sufficient time to develop. Just when I thought we were in for a large helping of psychology, Wegner bops Stern on the head, whips his gun and limps off into the night.

The indifferently dubbed version under review is heavily cut in places, and this would account for insufficient plot explanation in the earlier scenes. Indeed, if it hadn't been for the detailed synopsis I was given, I would have been metaphorically in the dark during the screening.

Certainly the second half of the film is clearer and better sustained than the first half, and Weidenmann knows how to use silence effectively. He also employs an irregular bongo-drum beat in the pre-robbery scenes, creating a creepy night atmosphere far better than a thousand vibrating violins.

Hardy Kruger manages to build something quite solid for Wegner out of very flimsy components, but even he cannot render credible the sight of a badly wounded man scattering red corpuscles all over Berlin and evading a large scale police hunt with remarkable ease. He has one powerful little scene where he hides in a workshop and operates on himself to remove the bullet in his thigh. Unfortunately, a badly judged cut spoils the end of the sequence. A conventional thriller, helped along by a solid central performance and efficient night-time photography.

DAVID RIDER

UNDERWORLD USA

Produced, written and directed by Samuel Fuller. Director of photography, Hal Mohr. Art director, Robert Peterson. Edited by Jerome Thoms. Music by Harry Sukman. Globe Enterprises production, distributed by British-Lion-Columbia. American. Cert. X. 95 mins.

Tolly (as a man), CLIFF ROBERTSON; *Cuddles*, DOLORES DORN; *Sandy*, BEATRICE KAY; *Gela*, PAUL DUBOV; *Connors*, ROBERT EMHARDT; *Driscoll*, LARRY GATES; *Gus*, RICHARD RUST; *Gunther*, GERALD MILTON; and *Smith*, ALLAN GRUENER.

Sam Fuller is a genuine artist who can't quite grow up. Like *Merrill's Marauders*, *Underworld, USA* has a slightly dated air, being a laggard in the recent cycle of gangster films; the choice of subjects suggests an inner hesitation on his part.

Even in the days of the big Hollywood studios and their formulae, Fuller contrived to be as independent as possible; and though the faults of *Underworld, USA* have been attributed to the distributor's story requirements, the real explanation is, I think, that Fuller's own thinking is a mixture of formulae and sincerity, of moral clichés which he has adopted sincerely and of a profound cynicism which he can only just restrain.

The heroes of his best films—notably *Run of the Arrow*—are victims of their split loyalties, of their own egoism, of their contempt for society, women and tenderness, and of a sadism which the plot sometimes justifies as revenge. A nihilistic bitterness in his view of society is matched by an arbitrary, almost brutal assertion of patriotic and militaristic attitudes. French critics indulge in long discussions over whether or not Fuller's work is Fascist at heart. Really, I think, he is trying to square American cynicism and individualism with the jingoistic simplicities of the old John Ford era. He is trying to combine the idealistic language of democracy with a social philosophy as grim as that of the philosopher Hobbes: 'Covenants, without the sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all . . .' For society to hold together men need 'a common power to keep them in awe, and to direct their actions to the common benefit . . .'

Underworld, USA has a heavy intensity which makes it the most sincerely moral gangster film since Fritz Lang's *The Big Heat*. Ten-year-old Tolly Devlin sees his father beaten to death by hoodlums in an alley; after years in jail for petty crime he emerges, seeking revenge on the killers who by now are the big wheels in a vast crime syndicate. Cynically he plays along with the police to achieve his ends, and even mutters scornfully, 'Sucker!' when Cuddles, the ex-prostitute who loves him, risks her life to testify on his behalf. But when at last he realises that he loves her, he dies protecting her from underworld guns.

The story is crammed with the usual ingredients. The shadows of a beating-up on backalley brick walls, the drunk and sentimental speakeasy queen with her roomful of toy dolls, the big close-ups of scared eyes and sweating foreheads, the quiet young killer who dons dark glasses before rubbing out his victims, the underworld czar liquidating his lieutenants one by one, the hero's final stagger down dark streets to die kicking among the dustbins. Even the actors—comparative 'unknowns' as usually in Fuller's pictures—manage to look rather like other actors—Gunther rather like Fred Clark, Connors like Broderick Crawford.

But again and again ideas which, in summary, seem too corny to be true, are given a new lease of life. When Gus dons dark glasses it is because of a twinge of cold shame. There is a heavy, almost vicious use of symbols—Tolly dies under a poster which exhorts 'Give blood now'. The same weight is applied to physical details — a crook's fat body floating face downwards in a swimming pool, disinfectant dabbed on a deep cut in a girl's face. There is a weirdly sensuous moment where Cuddles, her face covered in bruises from a beating up, spits the skin from warm milk which she is drinking. The film's sense of pace is turgid, almost sensual; hence, though it moves slowly, it never drags.

Although the director's sense of continuity between shots is characteristically erratic, the shots themselves are admirably composed. Cliff Robertson gives a solid portrayal of Tolly's self-conceit, his misogyny, his bitter rage so deep that it has become for him the greatest pleasure in the world, the only reason for his existence. Tolly at 12 and Tolly as an adult are played by different actors, the vulnerability of one contrasting beautifully with the smiling spite of the other. Dolores Dorn, as Cuddles, is sometimes reminiscent of Eva-Marie Saint, playing with an intriguing blend of coldness and masochistic passion. All the acting is beautifully controlled; the scene of a corrupt cop's suicide exhibits Fuller's odd combination of a snide tenderness towards the evildoer and a heartless 'eye for an eye' morality.

Fuller's sympathy for corruption and sadism, together with his insistence on the extent to which morality in the last resort is asserted only by the use of force, in all its destructiveness, gives this film and all his films their extraordinary tension, their challenge to the sentimental liberal belief that right must triumph simply by being right. But Fuller's bitterness is not without a complacency of its own—the violence in his films is coldly orgiastic; and one feels he cannot mature as an artist until he has given up his all-too-easy acceptance of atrocities as an inevitable part of life. For all that, *Underworld, USA* is honestly felt, powerfully expressed and well worth seeing.

RAYMOND DURGNAT

THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH (*RE-ISSUE*)

Directed and produced by Alfred Hitchcock. Screenplay by John Michael Hayes, from a story by Charles Bennett and D. B. Wyndham-Lewis. Director of photography, Robert Burks. Art directors, Hal Pereira and Henry Bumstead. Edited by George Tomasini. Music by Bernard Herrmann. Paramount. American. Paramount release. VistaVision. Technicolor. Cert. A. 119 mins. Original release: 1955.

Dr. Ben McKenna, JAMES STEWART; *Jo McKenna*, DORIS DAY; *Mr. Drayton*, BERNARD MILES; *Mrs. Drayton*, BRENDA DE BANZIE; *Hank*, CHRIS OLSEN; *Jan Peterson*, HILLARY BROOKE; *Buchanan*, RALPH TRUMAN; *Louis Bernard*, DANIEL GELIN; *Ambassador*, MOGENS WEITH; *Val Parnell*, ALAN MOWBRAY; *Rien—Assassin*, REGGIE NALDER; *Edna*, BETTY BASKCOMB; and *Cindy*, CAROLYN JONES.

Even ardent admirers of Hitchcock sneer at his remake of *The Man Who Knew Too Much* and pass by on the other side. The critics in 1955 were fairly scathing, comparing it unfavourably with the 1934 original. Catching up with it for the first time in 1962 one is astonished that it can arouse so much hostility. Certainly the first version (with its 75 minutes now blown up to 119 minutes) is one of the most cunningly contrived and skilfully directed of the Gaumont-British series—*Sabotage* is probably the best, but this one comes a close second. judged, and some of it is marvellous sense of the bedraggled (The Temple of the Sun Worshippers, a tatty little Noncomformist chapel where the anarchists hung out was seediness at its nth degree) but you can't be seedy and bedraggled for two hours in VistaVision and colour (even the Albert Hall is got up to resemble the Hollywood Bowl).

So its not a frame-by-frame reworking of the original . . . but why should that surprise its critics? *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 1955 style, is a dazzling cross fertilisation of the original with *The Trouble with Harry*, its immediate predecessor in the Hitchcock canon and also scripted by John Michael Hayes. So the opening drags! In 1934 all Hitchcock could afford were Swiss backcloths, by 1955 he could command a Moroccan location—and doesn't he hold things up while the local colour is splashed around—but once he's back in London the hand of the master grips one inexorably by the throat.

Basically the story hasn't changed, it still centres on a couple who get mixed up with a plot to assassinate a politician. The right proportion of comedy to thrills is skilfully judged, and some of it is marvellous sleight-of-hand with all the bravura one associates with Hitchcock. James Stewart's visit to a Camden Town taxidermist's shop, a place he believes to be a hotbed of spies, is sinisterly amusing, as is the eventual tracking down of the gang to a chapel in Bayswater where Bernard Miles functions as the most unctuous of clergymen. And that Albert Hall climax, a cantata for cymbal-clash and gunshot, is a rouser even if the director, almost contemptuously it would seem, spins it out so long the mechanics show through. Most of the later scenes have a whiff of the genuine Hitchcockery about them.

A well-written script with some sardonic dialogue ('I'm sorry you have to sneak out the back way but we have to preserve a respectable front') plus some nicely adjusted playing helps turn this one into a splendid entertainment. Stewart and Doris Day create a genuine feeling of the frictions and understandings of a married couple in their scenes together (even if they have raised a most kidnappable son). Doris Day, in particular, gives an exceptional performance, playing the distracted mother at exactly the right degree of intensity, less would have been unbelievable, more would have been too tragic. Bernard Miles and Brenda de Banzie are sinisterly comic in just the right proportions, and there's a beautiful little cameo from Betty Baskcomb as Edna, a slatternly sinister and the only character who could have bridged the disparate worlds of the two versions.

In checking off Hitchcock's masterpieces I doubt if *The Man Who Knew Too Much* would be an automatic choice, but it still unsteadies the nerves as the work of no other director can. The film's other claim to distinction is that it seems to be the first in which Hitchcock recognised, and portrayed, the cruelties of bureaucracy (neither the police nor MI5 come out of this one with much credit). This anti-authoritarian slant coloured his next one, *The Wrong Man*, to a Kafkaesque intensity and has touched all his work, to a certain extent, since then (the handling of the psychiatrist in *Psycho* for instance). I'm sorry now I missed *The Man Who Knew Too Much* in 1955; it seems to have been a crucial film in its director's development.

RICHARD WHITEHALL

Dawg days

ANIMATION

by David Rider

Despite the parlous state of many American cartoon studios, Terrytoons have sufficient confidence in distributors and exhibitors to introduce a series featuring an entirely new character, Deputy Dawg. I wish I could report that the unit have something new and revolutionary to offer—but they haven't. In common with the majority of current Hollywood animated films, these products suffer from obvious lack of time and money—they are slapdash and limited in appearance and action. The two I have seen are *Dragon My Foot* and *Tennessee Walking Horse*, the first being a rather silly story relating the adventures of Deputy Dawg and his henchmen when trying to capture a baby dragon. The second film is a slight improvement: an old racehorse condemned to the glue factory is rescued and trained to race again by Deputy Dawg. The story has possibilities, some of which are used to good effect. Overall defects of these films are the faintly vulgar colouring and indefinite style—four directors are credited, the cartoons apparently being mass-produced by a special unit.

What a contrast these routine cartoons are to most of those shown at the 4th International Festival of Animated Films at Annecy in June.

Annecy is a rare bird among festivals, the specialist festival. For six days, leading directors and animators compared notes, discussed their craft, made new friends and saw 152 films of fascinating variety.

The sheer volume of films instantly precludes detailed examination, so I shall mention the most interesting films, starting with Belgium and Eddy Ryssack's sharp satire on big business methods, *Teeth Is Money*, which owes something to Dusan Vukotic's *Concerto For Sub-Machine Gun* in conception but achieves its own bright visual style.

Among the films entered by the National Film Board of Canada was Trevor Fletcher's *Four Line Conics*, a brilliantly animated, esoteric illustration of higher mathematics which no-one understood but which was well received on purely technical grounds. For impeccable timing and grace of movement it would be difficult to equal Rene Jodoin's *Dance Square* in which softly coloured squares divided and sub-divided themselves in perfect time to the music.

Le Casque De Fer, Czechoslovakia, directed with powerful intensity by Josef Kabrt, was the most blatant propaganda film shown, though admittedly it was a brilliant, cogent piece of animation. No greater contrast could be found than Vladimir Lehky's superb, cheerful puppet film *Un Cours Pour Les Hommes* with attractively designed figures animated with amazing precision and wit.

The maddest piece of the Festival was *Le Cadeau* (France), directed by Jacques Vasseur and Dick Roberts, an increasingly hilarious tale of a desperate little man's efforts to find a 'honk' for a motor horn that goes 'moo' when pressed. Quite convulsively funny.

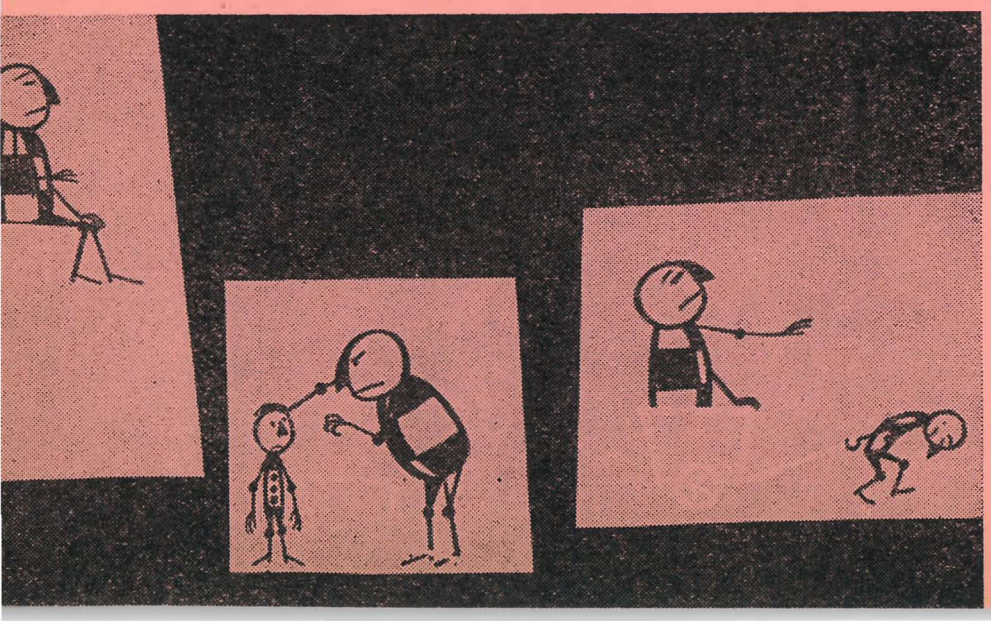
Great Britain usually means Halas and Batchelor, by virtue of sheer volume of output, but their conventional, even dull entries were overshadowed by films from George Dunning and Dick Williams. Dunning's *The Apple*, on which Williams collaborated, is a series of ingenious gags perpetrated on a man trying to pick a solitary apple from a straggly tree; it boldly held backgrounds for several seconds between episodes. Williams' own film, *Love Me, Love Me, Love Me* had special suave French narration richly intoned by Kenneth Williams. Drawn in an almost casual style *Love Me* is the first time Williams has revealed elements of humanism and compassion, qualities absent from his clinical, dispassionate study of egoism in *The Little Island*.

Gyula Macskassy, Hungary, directed *Duel*, one of the few propaganda films to be entertaining, and revealed an inventiveness and speed of execution that owes something to Hollywood. Owing nothing to Hollywood was the dramatic Polish puppet film *Basilica*, by Serafinowicz and Wieczorkiewicz, a splendidly atmospheric nightmare fantasy about a bird with heat-ray eyes.

American entries were purely commercial: Connie Rasinki's *Peanut Battle* showed Terrytoons' splendid Sidney rather off form, though Sylvester and Speedy Gonzales were a popular success in *The Pied Piper of Guadelupe*, a masterpiece of timing from Friz Freleng. Finally, Bob Clampett's *Wildman From Wildsville*, an insane little film moving at breakneck pace and reminiscent of Tex Avery's best work.

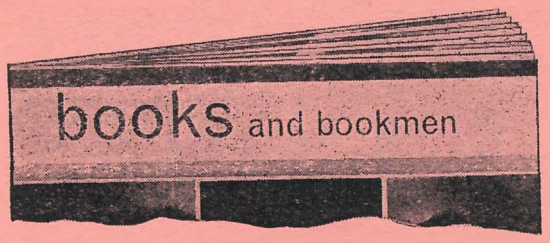
Prize for First Film went to Italy's Giulo Gianini and Emanuele Luzzati for *Paladini di Francia*, a cut-out film of distinctively individual style with Gothic elements in the story and rich, glowing colour. The Best Children's Film was adjudged to be *Where is Mama?* from China (collective direction) which had a true Chinese flavour in its fluid, misty art-work. Dick Williams collected the Best Satire prize for his cutting *Lecture On Man*, while Bruno Bozzetto collected the Critics' Award for his brilliant, impeccable film *Alpha Omega*. A Special Jury Prize was awarded to John Hubley's *Of Stars and Men*, an over-long (63 minutes) but sumptuously designed and expertly animated film which failed to fully exploit the possibilities of the subject matter. The Grand Prix went to Britain for George Dunning's *The Flying Man*, a haunting film in which the images were painted on glass and then filmed: more the animation of colours than of figures. A bold choice for a Grand Prix and, from a purely academic point of view, it will be interesting to see what films this new technique sparks off.

A final, sobering thought: how many of these splendid films will be widely seen, or even seen at all, in this country?



● *Three screens in one are used by Vladimir Lehky, a Czech, in his cartoon film 'The Parasite'*

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS



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To Hell with the Critics by John Wain
Trevor Allen on Francis Brett Young
Anthony Blond on What They Said at Edinburgh
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100 new books/Nicholas Monsarrat on Me
and the Duke/Robert Holles Braine at the Top
Katharine Whitehorn So You Want To Be An Author

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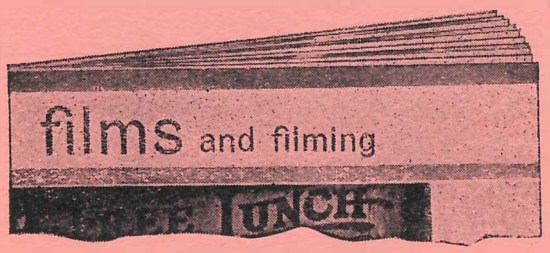
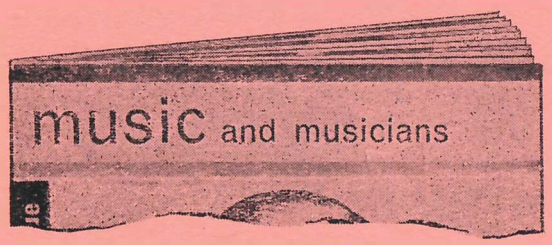


The Real 'Star' of Cleopatra by Al Capp
Archibald Colquhoun on safari with Visconti
Dietrich 30 years an angel
Son of Uncle Sam: a decade of American cinema
The Trial of Orson Welles/The Saint and The Boys
FILMGUIDE-pull-out guide to 50 new films



Peter Pratt on Martyn Green/Philip Hope-Wallace on
Joan Sutherland/Stanley Sadie on Idomeneo/
Benny Green on Porgy and Bess
Noël Goodwin at Edinburgh/Michael Marcus
at Salzburg/Hotter's new Siegfried
pull-out MUSICGUIDE supplement to all Britain's
musical events in October

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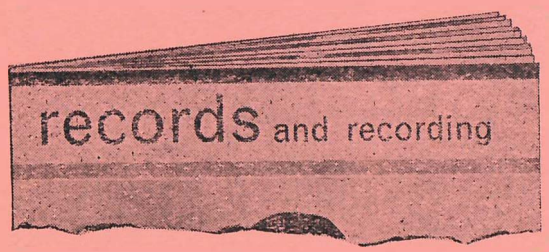

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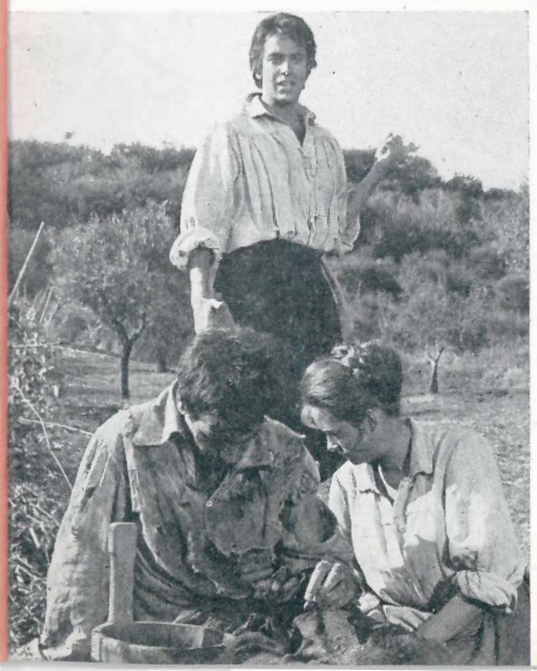
		FRANK SINATRA SEASON
	Oct. 21—4 days Oct. 28—4 days	**FROM HERE TO ETERNITY a** Oct. 25—3 days **OCEAN'S ELEVEN a** **NEVER SO FEW a** Nov. 1—3 days **NOT AS A STRANGER a**
CHELSEA FLA 4388	Oct. 21—4 days Oct. 28—4 days Nov. 1—3 days	PETER USTINOV, Humphrey Bogart, **WE'RE NO ANGELS u** Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, **INDISCREET a** Cary Grant, David Niven, **THE BISHOP'S WIFE u**
CROYDON CRO 6655	Oct. 7—7 days Oct. 14—7 days Oct. 21—7 days	BRANDO, **VIVA ZAPATA a** WILL HAY, **CONVICT 99 a** **A SUMMER PLACE a** PETER USTINOV, **HOTEL SAHARA, u** Claude Chabrol's **WEB OF PASSION x** **CARMEN JONES a**
EDGWARE RD. PAD 5716	Oct. 7—7 days Oct. 21—7 days	**PEACE TO THE NEWCOMER (Russian)** FRANK SINATRA, GRACE KELLY, **HIGH SOCIETY a**
KILBURN MAI 6767	Oct. 7—7 days Oct. 14—7 days Oct. 21—7 days	Alfred Hitchcock's **VERTIGO, a** **VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED a** ORSON WELLES, **COMPULSION, a** SHIRLEY MacLAINE, **ALL IN A NIGHT'S WORK a** ORSON WELLES, **JANE EYRE, a** Doris Day, **Please Don't Eat the Daisies u**
NOTTING HILL PAR 5750	Oct. 14—4 days Oct. 21—4 days Oct. 28—7 days	Eva Marie Saint, Don Murray, **A HATFUL OF RAIN x** Laurence Olivier, Leslie Howard, **49th PARALLEL u** MARIO LANZA, Ann Blyth, **THE GREAT CARUSO u**
STOCKWELL BRI 2513	Oct. 7—4 days Oct. 21—7 days	**STALAG 17 a** **THE CAMP ON BLOOD ISLAND x** **THE NAZI CRIMES AND PUNISHMENT x** **ORDERS TO KILL a**
TOOTING BEC BAL 5566	Oct. 14—7 days Oct. 21—7 days	Jean Paul Belmondo, **WEB OF PASSION x** **PLAYING AT LOVE x** **LES ADOLESCENTES x** **NIGHTS OF TEMPTATION a**
VOGUE TOOTING BAL 6788	Oct. 7—5 days Oct. 14—5 days	**THE FLY x** **THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER x** SINATRA, **HIGH SOCIETY a** **COUNT FIVE AND DIE a**
CHESTER Tel: 21354	Oct. 8—6 days Oct. 14—7 days Oct. 28—7 days	June Ritchie, Schlesinger's **A KIND OF LOVING x** **FLAT TWO u** PETER USTINOV, Deborah Kerr, Robert Taylor, **QUO VADIS a** **OCEAN'S ELEVEN a** **DRUMS ACROSS THE RIVER a**
GLASGOW CEN 3400	Oct. 8—6 days Oct. 22—6 days	MARIO LANZA, Dorothy Kirsten, **THE GREAT CARUSO u** JOHN MILLS, Michael Redgrave, **THE WAY TO THE STARS, u**
TATLER LEEDS Tel: 25355	Oct. 7—7 days Oct. 21—7 days	Jean-Pierre Mocky's **THE SNOBS x** **BED WITHOUT BREAKFAST x** SINATRA, Dean Martin, Angie Dickinson, **OCEAN'S ELEVEN a**
MANCHESTER CEN 6015	Oct. 14—7 days Oct. 21—7 days Oct. 28—7 days	ALEC GUINNESS, JOHN MILLS, **TUNES OF GLORY a** PETER SELLERS, Terry Thomas, **THE NAKED TRUTH, u** Laurence Olivier, David Niven, **WUTHERING HEIGHTS u**
SHEFFIELD Tel: 25624	Oct. 21—7 days Oct. 28—7 days	MARILYN MONROE, Billy Wilder's **SOME LIKE IT HOT a** MARIO LANZA, Ann Blyth, **THE GREAT CARUSO u**
SOUTHAMPTON Tel: 23465	Oct. 21—7 days Oct. 28—7 days	Richard Todd, Michael Redgrave, **THE DAM BUSTERS u** Errol Flynn, Dean Stockwell, Rudyard Kipling's **KIM u**
SWINDON Tel: 22497	Oct. 7—7 days Oct. 25—3 days	**NAZI CRIMES AND PUNISHMENT x** **Seven Ways from Sundown u** **TUNES OF GLORY a** **COUNT FIVE AND DIE a**

● *The Bishop (Akim Tamiroff) shocks the monastery by announcing that he wants Joseph to study for the priesthood*

Edward Dmytryk's THE RELUCTANT SAINT

● *Monastery life is far from sombre (right) when Joseph is around (Maximilian Schell and Guilo Bosetti)*

Below: His simplicity earns the friendship of two lovers (Mark Damon and Luciana Paluzzi) who work with him in the vineyards



● *Joseph's 'graduation' from Sister Nunziata's (Elisa Cegani) school had been delayed by a series of accidents and illnesses until he was twenty*

Saint Joseph was an accident-prone young man who made up for what he lacked intellectually by simple faith. Celebrating his first mass after being ordained as a priest, he was seen to rise several feet off the ground - a mystery that was partly responsible at least for his rising to sainthood.

Edward Dmytryk's film is concerned with the personality of this saint of 'whimsical charm and simple humanity'. It was Dmytryk who made 'Give Us This Day', 'The Juggler' and 'The End of the Affair', all films concerned with a religious way of life. The original screenplay for 'The Reluctant Saint' is by John Fante and Joseph Petracca

SIDNEY FURIE'S THE BOYS

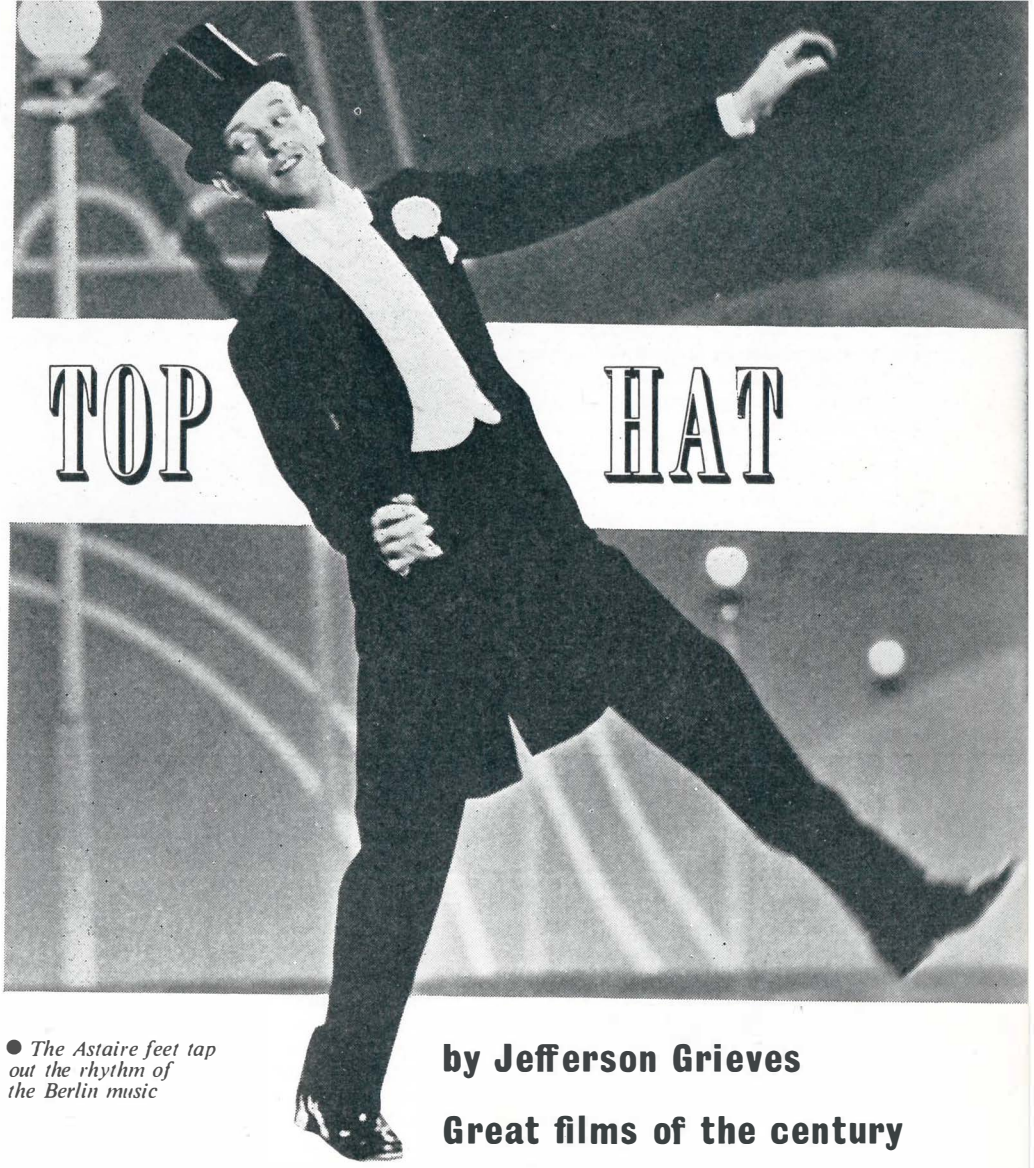
● *Defence counsel (Robert Morley) examines the lives of each of the boys (Ronald Lacey, Tony Garnett, Jess Conrad and Dudley Sutton)*

Four boys are charged with murder. The prosecution claims they brutally attacked and killed an old garage attendant. The defence, aware that there is prejudice against the boys only because they live in a tough, working class district, has the difficult task of persuading the jury that high spirits and a low standard of education are not in themselves enough to hang a man. Sidney Furie's film, the second to be produced by Gala, was written by Stuart Douglass

● *Above: A family row over a pair of winkle-picker shoes, (Rita Webb and Jess Conrad). Below: A night out in a London pub with the girls (Jill Mai Meredith, Dudley Sutton, Carol White and Tony Garnett). Right: Richard Todd, as prosecuting counsel, ruthlessly assembles evidence against the boys until he begins to doubt his own case*

'At the studio the work was fun. Ginger and I never failed to find plenty to laugh about. Rehearsals with Hermes Pan brought out many practical jokes. The entire crew entered into the spirit which prevailed. So much was happening—time flew by' FRED ASTAIRE: *Steps in Time*

TOP HAT



● *The Astaire feet tap out the rhythm of the Berlin music*

by Jefferson Grieves

Great films of the century

Top Hat. USA 1935: Production Company: RKO-Radio. Producer: Pandro S. Berman. Director: Mark Sandrich. Screenplay: Dwight Taylor and Allan Scott, based on a story by Dwight Taylor. Dance Direction: Hermes Pan. Music and lyrics: Irving Berlin. Photography: David Abel. Editor: William Hamilton.

Cast: *Jerry Travers*, Fred Astaire; *Dale Tremont*, Ginger Rogers; *Horace Hardwick*, Edward Everett Horton; *Madge Hardwick*, Helen Broderick; *Alberto Beddini*, Erik Rhodes; *Bates*, Eric Blore.
Certificate: A. Running time: 105 minutes.

Plot synopsis: Arriving in London to star in his Broadway success, Jerry Travers meets his producer Horace Hardwick, and puts up in the latter's hotel room. He meets Dale Tremont, who is staying in the room below, and starts up a romance with her. She is modelling clothes for the dress designer Beddini. Horace's wife Madge, who knows Dale, telegrams her from the Venice Lido, asking Dale to join her. She also mentions that her husband is staying at Dale's London hotel. When Dale finds Horace's room number, she concludes that Jerry is Madge's husband and sets off for Venice with Beddini. Horace's valet Bates follows in hot pursuit.

In the interval of his show, Jerry finds out that Dale is in Venice with Horace's wife, and orders a plane for the Sunday morning. At the Lido, the confusion of identies becomes more and more involved and Dale, hurt by what she imagines to be the callousness of Madge's husband, accepts Beddini's proposal of marriage. All is, however, solved by the suave intervention of Bates masquerading, in one of his numerous disguises, as a clergyman, and Dale finds herself free to marry the man she now knows to be Jerry Travers.

Background: It was natural that, as soon as films began to talk, they should sing. Sound hit the screen in songs interspersed into an otherwise conventional silent film, *The Jazz Singer*. A crude gimmick, said the prophets, with no future . . . but two years later no more silents were being made. And among the first of the new talkies were musicals.

The spectacular was first on the scene, when MGM, in 1928, made the first all-talking, all-singing screen musical, *The Broadway Melody*. For this, Thalberg evolved the technique of pre-recording the numbers, which were presented with no camera movement. The 'Wedding of the Painted Doll' sequence broke into colour—its first use in a talkie, and the film won an Academy Award.

Stage shows, stage artists, song and lyric writers then began the Broadway-to-Hollywood migration. The musical was in. Spectacle was queen. Busby Berkeley's chorines danced around reproductions of entire New York blocks or across the lids of giant grand pianos, drifted in galleons over artificial lakes, or shimmered mermaid-like amid glistening waterfalls. Overhead shots of patterned dancers, arranged more for decorative tableau effect than with an eye to choreography, left their legacy on into the 'Piccolino' finale of *Top Hat*.

In Britain, the main stream has always been gentler. British musicals were less slick, and signs of strain were apt to show in production numbers. Here the appeal lay in a disarming innocence. *Sunshine Suzy*, *Jack's the Boy*, *Tell Me Tonight*, *Evergreen*—there is a distinct afinity (it would perhaps be too much to call it influence) between these Gainsborough confections and the easy charm of the Astaire-Rogers series. Certainly, the outstanding partnership of the early British musical, that of Jack Buchanan and Elsie Randolph, bears a striking resemblance to Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

It was *42nd Street*, in America, that began to get away from the idea of the chorine as a beautiful automaton, displaying an almost military precision amid towering sets. It presented her as a human being, searching for and precariously hanging on to her job in the Depression slump. The progression from regimentation to choreography, and the subsequent rise of the dance as a medium of expression, had to wait for Rogers and Astaire.

Most of the musicals, indeed, were story-less anthologies of elaborate turns by various stars; or, if they had a story, the numbers were a thing apart from it—performed on-stage at the climax of a back-stage romance or a puttin'-on-a-show plot.

With the Astaire-Rogers musicals, the numbers began to be integrated into the story line, to reflect the moods or emotions of the protagonists, much as the soliloquy did in the Elizabethan theatre, or the chorus in the Greek amphitheatre—only here, the devices of choreography and camera movement ensured that the action did not become too static.

These films are the classics of the early film musicals. They had an ace up their sleeves in the superlative scores by masters who had won their spurs on Broadway: Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern. They had lively scripts. And they had Fred Astaire.

The films have a fairly consistent pattern of plot. Astaire is usually the professional hoofer in pursuit of the self possessed out-door girl, Ginger Rogers. The old and tried pattern of boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl, boy-wins-girl is adhered to. But the dances are integrated with the story line, the couple dancing as individuals in true-to-life settings—with the

occasional bow to tradition in on-stage or elaborate ballroom numbers, or in the grand finale. If the dances themselves still tend sometimes to be sublimated ballroom exhibitions, they are a big step forward in expressiveness from what had gone before. And at last the camera begins to move with the dancing couple.

Biographical: *Director:* Mark Rex Sandrich was born in New York on October 26, 1900. He was educated at Columbia University, specialising in science and mathematics. After University, he settled down as a writer of short stories and plays, entering films in 1922.

Among his first pictures as a director were *Hello Sailor*, *Cow's Husband*, *Runaway Girl*, *Lady Lion* and *Tales of Hollywood*. In 1931 he opened a contract with RKO, directing comedies like *Troubles From Abroad* and *The Way of All Fish*, as well as appearing in several comedy shorts, until 1934, when he directed the second Astaire-Rogers film *The Gay Divorcee*. *Top Hat* followed in 1935, *Follow the Fleet* in 1936, *Shall We Dance?* in 1937, *Carefree* in 1938, this being his last film with these stars. In 1939 he went to Paramount to make *Man About Town*, following this with *Buck Benny Rides Again* and *Love Thy Neighbour* in 1940, *Skylark* in 1941 and *Holiday Inn* in 1942.

Stars: Frederick Austerlitz was born in Omaha, Nebraska on May 10, 1900, some 18 months after his sister Adele. She was put at an early age into a local dancing school to learn tap routines, and was soon performing at concerts and church socials. She showed such promise that Mr and Mrs Austerlitz packed their bags and set off for New York, where both children were entered at Claude Alvienne's dancing school, and later at Ned Wayburn's School of Dance. They attended dramatic class, too, and when Fred was only 7 he appeared as Roxane opposite his sister's Cyrano de Bergerac. He had already earned his first professional fee as a dancer in Keyport, New Jersey, at the age of five, and brother and sister spent most of their childhood giving three performances a day in vaudeville. They adopted the name Astaire and by their early teens were busy travelling thousands of miles in Canada and the States, gaining experience, inventing routines, polishing technique.

In 1917 they opened in *Over the Top* in New York. After this Sigmund Romberg revue, offers began to pour in. They did the *Passing Show of 1918*, toured with Kreisler's *Apple Blossoms*, flopped with the operetta *The Love Letter*, had a short run in *The Bunch and Judy* and gained their stardom in *For Goodness' Sake*, which came to London in 1923 as *Stop Flirting*. For the next few years they alternated in New York and London with *Lady be Good* and *Funny Face*. The latter was considered for a screen version, and the Astaires were tested, but the idea came to nothing. In 1933, during the run of *Smiles*, their first unsuccessful show since stardom Fred met a young girl who had become an overnight hit on Broadway in *Girl Crazy*—Ginger Rogers. *The Bandwagon* in 1931 was the partnership's swan song.

The following year, Adele married into the English aristocracy and left her brother to go it alone, which he did most successfully in Cole Porter's *The Gay Divorce*. Also in the show were Eric Blore and Erik Rhodes.

● *The Piccolino number on the Venetian set. 'Ballet has not yet influenced the film; only the solo numbers are really worked out'*

During the run of *The Bandwagon*, the Astaires had made a 2-reel short for Vitaphone, but neither had been impressed with the cinema as a medium. Now, however, encouraged by his solo success, the talent scouts rushed Fred off for a fresh screen test. 'Can't act. Can dance a little', was the RKO verdict. However, he was given *Flying Down to Rio* on which to bite his teeth. As it was not ready, he was first loaned to MGM to dance one number, as himself, in the Joan Crawford back-stage musical *Dancing Lady*. Then, with *Flying Down to Rio* ready for production, Astaire was teamed up with the young dancer he had met on Broadway three years previously, Ginger Rogers.

The girl whom Schiaparelli was to call 'the most perfect type of American woman' was born Virginia Katherine McMath at Independence, Missouri in 1911. Her first taste of show business was gained as a dancing tot on cinema stages between the first and second features. Her mother was determined to build Virginia into a star, and began by getting her bit parts in films.

After winning cups for the Charleston, and a State Championship contest at the age of 14, Virginia went into Vaudeville, later winning acclaim in *Girl Crazy*. In the same year, she landed a part in the film *Young Man of Manhattan* at Paramount. From 1930 to 1933, she made several films, none of them as a star, for Paramount, Pathe, Monogram, First National and Fox. It was her performance as the chorus girl Anytime Annie in Warner's *42nd Street* that impressed RKO enough to offer her partnership with Astaire in *Flying Down to Rio*.

Until 1940, Astaire made all his films with Ginger Rogers, apart from George Stevens' *Damsel in Distress*, in which he and Joan Fontaine danced Gershwin's music to a plot unconvincingly based on P G Wodehouse's English house parties. Ginger Rogers, however, made twelve other films during the same period, including a thriller *Star of Midnight* with William Powell, a melodrama *Stage Door* with Katherine Hepburn and several light comedies, including *Vivacious Lady* with James Stewart and *Having a Wonderful Time* with Douglas Fairbanks Jnr. Most of these were for RKO, the studio for which Astaire and Rogers made the series of musicals for which their combined names will always be remembered.

The line began with *Flying Down to Rio*, a not very prepossessing start, though the 'Carioca' became the rage with the young set. The tradition of fantastic settings had not yet faded, and one number took place on the wings of an aeroplane supposedly in flight!

Filming over, Astaire took *The Gay Divorce* to London, but was summoned back to Hollywood when his two films proved successful at the box office. Then the partnership got under way with a film of his last stage success, re-titled *The Gay Divorcee*. Mark Sandrich directed, and the 'Continental' number won the first ever song Oscar.

The following year saw *Roberta*, with a Jerome Kern score, and Astaire playing the part created on Broadway by Bob Hope. William Seiter directed. In the same year, 1935, *Top Hat* repeated the sophisticated formula of *The Gay Divorcee* with an assurance and technical sparkle that proved Rogers the ideal replacement for Adele Astaire. This perfection was never again to be attained, though the subsequent films in the series had plenty of moments to treasure. 1936 brought *Follow the Fleet*, directed by Sandrich, with another Berlin score; and George Stevens' *Swing Time* to music by Kern. Astaire kissed Rogers for the first time—in slow motion—in the 'Colour blind' number of Sandrich's *Carefree* (Berlin again), and in 1939 the line came to an end with H G Potter's *Story of Vernon and Irene Castle*, in which Rogers and Astaire danced their farewell on a gigantic map of the United States.

Recognising the limited scope and reputation she would have as Astaire's partner, Ginger Rogers announced her intention of going 'straight'. She was to dance with Astaire once more, when Judy Garland had to withdraw from *The Barkleys of Broadway* in 1949. But by then much of the old 'togetherness' was gone.

In her subsequent dramatic career, Ginger Rogers' most rewarding performances have been in *Kitty Foyle* (1940) for which she won an Academy Award, Garson Kanin's *Tom, Dick and Harry* (1940) and Wellman's burlesque *Roxie Hart* (1942). Other films have included Duvivier's *Tales of Manhattan*, Wilder's *The Major and the Minor*, the Ku Klux Klan drama *Storm Warning* (in which she

● *Coachman masquerade for Astaire as he woos the fashion model played by Rogers. 'Plot and characters are dated but Astaire's dancing is timeless'*

● *Edward Everett Horton, as the producer, has a spot of trouble with his wife Madge (Helen Broderick) who he has accused of infidelity with dress designer Beddini (Erik Rhodes)*

played the part turned down by Lauren Bacall) and *The Groom Wore Spurs*. Her last film was *Oh Men! Oh Women!* in 1957.

Astaire was never again to choose a regular partner for his films, preferring to select a new one for each rôle. His style, too, subtly altered after the early series. The same easy nonchalance, the same charm were there, but something of the spontaneity had gone—partly due to the more 'choreographed' nature of the numbers he was given to do, and partly perhaps to the more stylised sets that replaced the intimate settings in which the famous partnership played out its frothy, sophisticated romance.

In 1958, he played his first non-dancing rôle in Kramer's *On the Beach*. He has since played straight rôles in *The Pleasure of his Company* with Debbie Reynolds, and *The Notorious Landlady*, with Kim Novak. His full career was listed in a *films and filming* article in December, 1959.

Composer: Irving Berlin's family arrived in New York from Russia in 1892, when he was four. His father was rabbi and cantor, and Irving gained early acquaintance with synagogue music. As a boy, he sang on East Side street corners for pennies, and at 14 ran away to earn a living singing in Bowery cafes. A break came when he was hired as a songwriter by a publishing firm, and the publication of 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' in 1911 pulled him out of the rut and into the limelight of Broadway. The scores of *Ziegfeld Follies* and *Music Box* revues took him up to the World War I show *Yip, Yip, Yaphank*.

It was the 1927 *Ziegfeld Follies* that gained him his introduction to Hollywood and the newly opening prospect of the film musical. But his first chores on celluloid were modest ones. Sam Goldwyn got him to compose 'Marie' for a 1928 Vilma Banky vehicle *The Awakening;* in 1929 Lupe Velez sang 'Where is the Song of Songs for me?' in Griffiths' *Lady of the Pavements*, Mary Pickford's *Coquette* had a Berlin song for its title number, the Marx Brothers' *Coconuts* was loosely based on Berlin's stage comedy of the same name, and King Vidor's *Hallelujah* had two Berlin numbers. None of these films' credits contained his name.

In 1930, besides one song in George Fitzmaurice's *The Bad One*, with Dolores Del Rio, Berlin wrote the scores of two film musicals, the backstage tear-jerker *Puttin' On the Ritz* (whose title number was beautifully rendered by Astaire 16 years later in *Blue Skies*), and the Jolson vehicle *Mammy*. In 1931 *Reaching for the Moon*, with Fairbanks and Bebe Daniels, had a title waltz and a rhythm number sung by Daniels and Bing Crosby, then Berlin went back to another spate on Broadway. Three years later, Goldwyn's *Kid Millions* contained a song 'Mandy' sung by Eddie Cantor, Ethel Merman, Ann Sothern and a line-up of Goldwyn girls that included Lucille Ball.

Top Hat began Berlin's most fruitful Hollywood phase. He had just been voted America's Popular Composer Number One in a ballot in which Ludwig van Beethoven came fourth. In 1936 he scored *Follow the Fleet*, and two years later his final film for the pair, *Carefree*.

Among his most notable film scores since *Top Hat* have been the super-colossal *Alexander's Ragtime Band* with 26 Berlin songs—a large budget spectacle of three decades designed as a tribute to him (1938), *Holiday Inn* (1942); *This is the Army* (1943), in which Berlin himself warbled 'Oh, how I hate to get up in the morning' in a thin tenor; *Blue Skies*, Astaire's much publicised 'farewell' appearance (1946); *Easter Parade* with Astaire, Judy Garland and Ann Miller (1948); *Annie Get Your Gun* with Betty Hutton and Howard Keel (1951); *Call Me Madam* with Ethel Merman (1953); the ill-starred *White Christmas* (1954), in which Danny Kaye played the lead after Astaire and Donald O'Connor had successively succumbed to illness, and Dean Jagger took over the part of Millard Mitchell on the latter's death; and *There's No Business Like Show Business* (1955), in which Marilyn Monroe rendered 'Heat Wave'. Berlin is still active, and has just completed a Broadway musical, *Mr President*.

Reviews: C A Lejeune wrote in *The Observer* of 13th October, 1935, 'The tonic appearances of young Mr Fred Astaire in dancing comedy . . . are, to me, amongst the greatest joys of the modern cinema . . . Watching him, you are suddenly aware that the lower half of the cinema screen has been wasted all these years . . . I know of no screen stars except Chaplin and Fred Astaire who have really learned to act volubly from the knees down'. She added however, '*Top Hat* may not be Mr Astaire's most distinguished vehicle', a sentiment which was not echoed by *The Sunday Times*, which proclaimed *Top Hat* 'the crowning achievement of the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers combination'. *The Times* next day concurred—'they have never been seen to better advantage than in this film'.

Not that all was lavish praise. *The Daily Telegraph* criticised the 'thin plot', and went on, 'The Lido setting has a twentieth-century Christmas-cake appearance, which is a little depressing, and for some reason or other the most attractive Rogers elects to appear in a series of garments which are, almost without exception, remarkably ugly'. *The Sunday Express* made gentle fun of 'Cheek to cheek'—'It happens that nobody else wants to dance at this moment, and that Mr Astaire knows all the words, so he sings it to his partner, and again they go into a dance of complications which no ordinary girl would like to have sprung on her in an empty ballroom'—but concluded, 'Oh, why should I worry about the hows and whys of a couple who can conspire together with such charm, grace, skill and humour to adorn a smooth-flowing film of such infinite delight'.

In 1950, *Top Hat* was re-released as a second feature, and the reviews were not quite so complimentary. *The Evening News* found it 'a very strange and sometimes displeasing American whimsy', while the *Daily Herald* warned 'after fifteen years you may find the comedy a bit slow and Ginger's dancing more ordinary than memory promised'. But *The Sunday Times* noted that the comedy playing 'reminds one that comedy in a musical need not be crude' and declared it 'the best of all the Astaire-Rogers films, witty, graceful, pretty to look at, above all full of the sense of enjoyment which had been almost lost in the mechanical contemporary musical until it was restored the other day in *On the Town*.

Re-appraisal: Probably nostalgia plays a considerable part in our enjoyment, today, of *Top Hat;* a nostalgia similar to that which led to the gentle satire of old-style musicals in *Singin' in the Rain*. The film offers no intellectual problems—a gossamer thread of story (albeit a little laborious in its intricacy), music superlatively easy on the ear, gay, often amusing dialogue spoken by young, attractive people. Many of the absurdities of musical

comedy are present; for instance, we accept Astaire's sudden masquerade as a coachman without asking just how he got on to the box and into the rig-out in about 30 seconds flat.

Musicals have their roots in myth. Their world is essentially innocent and uncorrupted, inhabited by charming people whose love is always triumphant in the end. They have never seriously echoed the times in which they were written or set—and the elegant high life of the Astaire-Rogers films was committed to celluloid in the midst of the Depression years. Even war merely introduced a sort of maudlin patriotism, and changed the costume from tuxedo to uniform and the locale from high class hotel or theatre wings to the pup tent or the barracks.

But if plot and characters are dated, Astaire's dancing is timeless. *Top Hat* contains the image of Astaire that will for ever characterise him: the dapper, almost skinny figure, attired in faultless evening dress. For, despite his protest, 'I don't like top hats, white ties and tails', this is how he will be remembered—*is* remembered, indeed, for his days of film dancing appear to be over. Berlin's tuneful, rhythmic music suits his style perfectly—more so than the more sophisticated Gershwin, or the very different music to which Astaire has since adapted his versatility.

To him, dancing is as natural as walking—or more so, since his nonchalant lope seems often charmingly gauche. Once his twinkling feet pick up the rhythm of a tune, he is grace incarnate. The most casual occasions bring his feet to life to tap a raspberry into the stuffy silence of a London club, to send a pretty girl to sleep, or to express his joy at driving the same girl in a hansom cab. In fact, the expressiveness of his lower limbs compensates for the relative stiffness of his Pinocchio face. At his first meeting, he tells Ginger Rogers, 'Every once in a while, I find myself . . . dancing'. 'Oh', she retorts, 'I suppose it's some kind of affliction'.

Ginger Rogers, wonderful partner though she is, lacks Astaire's spontaneity. Only in the rumbustious final 'Piccolino' is she entirely without a slight stiffness. One feels that her dancing is acquired, not natural like Astaire's.

Nevertheless, they make a breathtaking couple, and the world is their dance floor. They can (though in *Top Hat* they do not) use stairs, furniture, even walls if necessary.

Despite Astaire's own words, 'I have never used my dancing . . . as a means of expressing myself', the numbers danced by him and Rogers in *Top Hat* express all there is to know about their feelings. 'Isn't it a lovely day?' is a veritable anthology of dance steps from tap to ballroom; it is also the perfect expression of the wooing and winning of a coquettish girl by a charming young man. They do not need to kiss—her assault on his startled lips when she is trying to compromise him hardly counts—the progress of their true love runs gracefully if not smoothly through a series of exuberant numbers.

Their routines have the deceptive ease of the impromptu, and a refreshing lack of formality (though never of form). This is the gentle pace of musical comedy rather than the spectacular arrogance of 'the musical'. Even the 'Piccolino' is only modest spectacular from the dance point of view. Ballet has not yet brought its influence to bear, and only the solo numbers are really worked out. The formation dancing of the 'Piccolino' makes no attempt at continuity. The camera cuts from one decorative floral pattern of dancers straight to the same dancers in a different set-up. The effect is rather of a series of animated tableaux than of a ballet. Even the soloists' 'Cheek to cheek', which begins in the natural setting of a dance-floor, is decorative first and dramatic second, as they move away from the other couples to circle in feathery elegance around a sort of de luxe Venetian version of the 'Isn't this a lovely day?' band stand.

But the numbers do have their dramatic effect. The on-stage title song perfectly mirrors Jerry Travers' delight at the thought of once again seeing the girl he believed gone for ever. In this number Astaire uses his cane as a third foot to implement his tapping shoes. Ironic use is made of two numbers. 'I'm fancy free', Jerry's song of carefree bachelor joy, is the very one that introduces him to Dale Tremont as she storms up from her room and into his life. And later, hurt and bewildered, Dale accepts Beddini's proposal of marriage while the sound track plays the tune to which she fell in love with Jerry, 'Isn't this a lovely day?'

The film posseses a bumper comic cast, a host of character comedians, each presenting his own speciality: Eric Blore, all lisp and puff-cheeked indignation; Erik Rhodes, primped and preened, serenading his own reflection, 'Oh Beddini, you are a fine fellow'!; Helen Broderick (mother of Broderick Crawford) drawling expertly-timed lines like, 'At my age, you take men as you find them—*if* you can find them'; Edward Everett Horton's double takes and perpetually harrassed astonishment at the injustice of life ('All I said was, "Darling", and she slapped me'.)

Rhodes and Blore were survivors from the stage (and screen) version of *The Gay Divorce.* Horton was one of God's (and the theatre's) gifts to Hollywood; his open mouthed, congenitally worried face was an almost inevitable ingredient—and very often the sole saving, scene-stealing grace—in the light comedies of the period.

This team takes over whenever Astaire and Rogers want to rest their feet, the plot line twisting tortuously to let everyone in on the act. This comedy of errors has more turns than one of Astaire's dances, and each one is presented at such a leisurely pace that the film is in fact much longer than the excellent playing makes it seem. The elaborate precautions taken to ensure that characters enter and exit just in time to meet or miss each other are time-consuming, and matters are not helped by Sandrich's rather pedestrian direction, and his willingness to let scenes play themselves out in full shot before an almost static camera.

Much of the dialogue is made up of weak puns and jokes like, 'What is this strange power you have over horses?' 'Horse power'. Handled by Groucho and Chico Marx, that line might be excruciatingly funny. Neither Rogers nor Astaire can make much of it, though their ineffable charm carries them easily through. With the comics it is otherwise. Only a few of the lines are intrinsically funny (Beddini's 'Never again will I allow women to wear my dresses' or Madge's 'He'll probably want me to pay myself alimony'), but to hear Blore's plummy tones saying, 'Allow us to introduce ourselves—we are Bates', Rhodes declaiming the Beddini family motto, 'For the woman the kiss; for the man the sword', or Horton and Broderick delivering any line at all, is sheer delight.

With its dancing, music, polished comedy and overall impression of charm and high spirits, *Top Hat* can still provide as happy an evening as anything in the cinema, from its opening close-up of a topper through to the glorious final image of the pair whirling over the bridge and down the canal bank. It remains the outstanding contribution of the days when the *genre* was still emerging from the chrysalis. Such a peak was not to be reached again until the great gathering of talent at MGM in the mid-forties flowered into such masterpieces as *On the Town, Singin' in the Rain* and *The Pirate.*

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● *Across the Bridge of Sighs —Astaire and Rogers in a typical dance routine*

see it yourself

● *This is the twentieth in a unique series. For the first time in film journalism you can actually see the films discussed by the experts.*
If you want to see 'Top Hat' you can borrow a print from the National Film Archive, 81 Dean-street, London W 1. Write for details to-day mentioning FILMS AND FILMING

BY GEORGE FENIN

Son of Uncle Sam

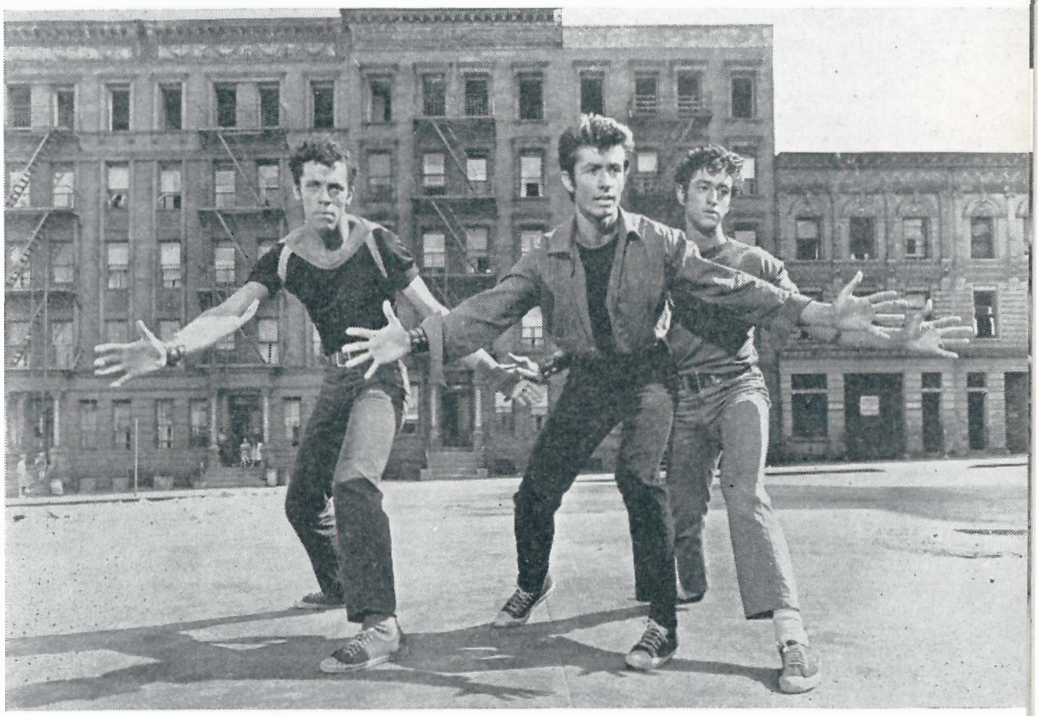
"In this decade Humphrey Bogart, Ronald Colman, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable and many others have disappeared forever and there are not many Marlon Brandos, Rod Steigers or Paul Newmans around to replace them"

In the Thirties, the vital forces of American veracity and realism, world famous in the Jazz Age and the Great Depression, had a rich tapestry to work upon. The lost generation of the Jazz Age, the sufferers of the Wall Street débâcle, the human beings fighting and dying in the USA were portrayed in cinematic opuses such as *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Crowd*, *Our Daily Bread*, *I Was a Fugitive from the Chain Gang*, *Scarface*, *Underworld*, *Fury*, *They Won't Forget*, *The Black Legion* and other memorable documents of the screen.

After the melodramas and the propaganda features of the early Forties, and by the end of the Second World War, the American screen entered the Fifties with a series of notable films, more adherent to the spirit and the anguish of the new times, in which several aspects of American problems were carved with absolute honesty. Robson and Werker treated the Negro drama in *Home of the Brave* and *Lost Boundaries;* Dmytryk and Kazan fought anti-Jewish prejudices in *Till the End of Time* and *Gentlemen's Agreement;* Daves revised the archaic cliche of the 'bad American Indian' in *Broken Arrow;* Wellmann, Wyler, Milestone and Zinnemann exposed War in *Story of GI Joe*, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, *A Walk in the Sun* and *The Men*.

These and other vital trends were, however, interrupted by a series of political and economic factors, which have not failed to impress their deep mark on the American films of the last decade. The emergence in the political scene of the late junior Senator from Wisconsin, Joseph MacCarthy, the controversies and polemics created around his activities as well as the onslaughts of rabid Right-Wing political organisations, the *causes celebres* of Alger Hiss, Klaus Fuchs and Judith Coplon, the appalling climate of hysteria, witch-hunting, blacklisting and violation of civil rights and liberties, are too well known to be mentioned here in detail. Suffice it to say that Hollywood, already indicted in the 1947 Trial of the Ten, now faced the attacks of fanatics, causing the separation from the Mecca of dozens of first class talents in the acting, directing and screenwriting fields. The loss of these blacklisted energies to the film industry represented the beginning of a definite decline in the quality of many films. Moreover, a heavy mantle of conformism was spread all over Hollywood, and the words 'social, human theme' became extremely suspect, and dangerously radical or, rather, subversive.

In the meantime a remarkably powerful economic factor was making its gradual appearance, to further complicate the dreamy existence of the industry. Audiences were beginning to dwindle. From the 90 millions in weekly attendance to the picture theatres in 1946, we came down to about 46 millions in 1956 and 42 millions in 1961. Several thousand theatres closed all over the Nation, an illustrious example among them being the famed 'Roxy' in New York, while the tendency grew to concentrate on small, rather 'intimate' cinemas. With America enjoying a fantastic prosperity, with the constant demographic increase in the USA, with hundreds of millions of dollars being spent by Americans in outdoors activities, cultural concentrations and various hobbies, the motion picture industry was the only one characterised by a constant and gradual loss of profits.



● *Gang on the prowl in Jerome Robbin's open air ballet in 'West Side Story' (1961) The film digs deeper than any other Hollywood musical*

The impact of television, and its ferocious competition, threw the industry into a state of panic. In this atmosphere of operetta *a la* Offenbach, it was decided to try other gadgets to stimulate a comeback of the masses to the friendly cinemas, a place where according to the film magnates, and to paraphrase Baudelaire *tout n'etait qu'ordre et beaute, luxe, calme et volupte.*

Thus, the Age of the Mammoth Screen made its appearance on September 30, 1952, at the Broadway theatre in New York City, with *This is Cinerama.* The new technical process by Fred Waller was well accepted by the critics, stupefied the masses, and skyrocketed the shares of 'Cinerama Productions' from 10 cents to over 6 dollars each at the Stock Exchange. Hollywood, desperately looking for a panacea, was already bent on the elimination of the 'B' feature, and on a gigantic offensive based on Technicolored dramas, musicals and comedies. Three-dimensional film systems were put again in circulation, but the frightful experience of the ludicrous *Bwana Devil* and of the *grand guignol House of Wax* caused an agonising reappraisal, and brains were stimulated to operate in the direction of the BIG screen. Cinerama, with its emphasis on panorama, could not suit the interests of an industry anxious to peddle a successful recipe of sex and violence. And Spyros Skouras saved the day with 'Cinemascope', the 'poorman's Cinerama', a process which Fritz Lang, in one of his rare moments of confessions on the record, stated to me to be the best screen for depicting a snake or a funeral. There was then an authentic flood of systems: Vistavision, Todd-Ao, Paravision, Superscope, Magnarama, Polirama, Vistarama, Cine-Miracle . . .

The studios started a big programme of

economies. They encouraged the trend to make pictures overseas, profiting from a loophole in the US Federal tax system, by which a company or a star working abroad could pay much less in taxes to Uncle Sam. They sold to Television a big backlog of pre-1948 pictures, for consumption on the home TV screens of millions of Americans.

In this decade, however, such 'panaceas' were inadequate, and a reorganisation in the old structure at Hollywood became necessary. The era of the shrewd and tyrannic Boss in the Studio was over. The death of Cohn of Columbia Pictures, the defenestration of Louis B. Mayer and the resignation of Dore Schary from MGM, the disassociation of Darryl Zanuck from Fox, the squabbles of Yates with the stockholders of Republic, the inglorious end of RKO, the sale of the Universal Studios to 'MCA' the powerful former talent agency and now the leading producers of films for TV constitute some of the examples of a terrific upheaval. The star-system was broken; today an actor does not have a regular contract, as in the past, and does not wait for the Studio to tell him what to do. He just invests in an independent production, and becomes a businessman, besides being an actor and a producer and often, even a director. And the actors are ageing. The good, 'classically recognised' stars such as Cary Grant, James Stewart and Jimmy Cagney, are approaching the end of long careers. In this decade, Humphrey Bogart, Ronald Colman, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable and many others have disappeared forever, and there are not many Marlon Brandos, Rod Steigers or Paul Newmans around to replace them. The situation is even more tragic when you think about the female stars, with a Bette Davis, a Joan Crawford, a Claudette Colbert, in a definite process of decadence.

The film industry has given great importance to the independent producer, who simply rents a studio and is partially financed by one important company, but who is responsible for the story, the director and the cast. Moreover, in Hollywood today the great majority of work is being performed by the technicians and artists for TV films. The set-up such as it existed in the Thirties and Forties, with a monolithic organisation of a Studio controlled by one man, is definitely over. The tendency is now to concentrate on a few, very costly pictures, with a gigantic screen and in Technicolor. Following in the wake of MGM, which saved itself from ruin with the commercial success of the *Ben-Hur* remake, Fox are now heavily banking on *Cleopatra*.

But it is to be noted that while Hollywood is no longer the centre of the world's filmic production (it is now fourth after Rome, Paris and Tokyo), New York is beginning to impart a very striking influence on the future perspectives of motion pictures in this country. The critical success of films such as *Shadows*, *Pull My Daisy*, *Come Back Africa*, *Weddings and Babies;* the polemics created about controversial works such as *Guns of the Trees*, *The Sins of Jesus;* the ferocious exposé of a society dominated by the terror of the Bomb and titillated by vices, as in *The Connection*, represent the fresh example of a turgid, talented, uncontrolled and absolutely anti-conformist state of mind agitated by a new group of filmmakers, who are getting progressively tired of the pharisaic trends of the official cinema which, be it Studio made or independent, is always subliminally injecting the vulgar and distorted values of a putrid Hollywoodian set-up. This emergence of the new american cinema constitutes one of the hopes for the complete overhauling of the motion picture in America where the existing structure, to use a phrase of Frank Lloyd Wright, 'should be completely erased, in order to provide for a vigorous flowering of a new form of art'.

Another important facet in the panorama of the cinema in the USA is represented by the stupendous increase of the art theatres in New York and generally speaking, in the Nation. It is not rare that good American pictures (Hollywood made, mind you) are launched in such art theatres, proving the admission, by the exhibitors, of the growing importance of this sort of house. New York, which has shown to the American Nation the masterpieces of the Italian Neo-Realism, which has 'discovered' Ingmar Bergman and Satyajit Ray, the British 'angry' filmmakers, the Polish and Russian new energies, is now busy in extolling the virtues of *Two Women*, *Rocco and His Brothers*, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, *A Summer to Remember*, and even the works of Argentine director Torre Nilsson. An appreciation of the classics has been growing steadily, and no less than a dozen theatres are continuously exhibiting old pictures, which are enjoying a tremendous success. Among the theatres which are in the forefront of this struggle for cinematic culture, are 'The New Yorker', directed by film historian Daniel Talbot, 'The Charles Theatre', directed by students Stein and Langsford, the 'Bleecker Street', directed by Lionel Rogosin of *On the Bowery* and *Come Back Africa* fame.

This proves the growing maturity of the American public, and its desire to be put in contact with films which depict Life in authentic terms, not necessarily grim or drab, as in the social dramas of the Twenties or Thirties, but genuinely realistic with as much freedom of expression in social, artistic and political terms, as it could and should be expected in a Nation where democracy is to be interpreted as a weapon for progress and not as a tool for the aberrations of the 'John Birch Society' followers.

The stupendous technological progress of humanity in the last decade has created by converse a spiritual regress, as noted by Thomas Mann, Bertrand Russell and Dr. Linus Pauling in their preoccupations as to the salvation of such humanity. In the cinematic field, taking in due consideration the context of the various political, social, economic and spiritual trends in America, there is no doubt that the past decade has signified the end of Hollywood as it was, and the necessity of a complete new outlook towards the cinema. In this period I can

● *Elia Kazan's 'On the Waterfront' (1954) established Marlon Brando as an actor of international repute*

count some remarkable films on the palms of my hands. First, one recognises the excellence of two Westerns: *High Noon*, by Fred Zinnemann, which is an hymn to the courage and dedication of an individual, as opposed to the cowardly conformist feeling of his neighbours; and *Shane*, by George Stevens, a saga of the only American *genre*, an opus in which the heroism of the men and women of the Old West bypasses at last its historical bonds and becomes legend, and mythology, In the drama of social content, one remembers *The Defiant Ones*, as well as *Judgment at Nuremberg*, in which producer-director Stanley Kramer has been able to express his consistently noble and uncompromising principles, on a human and a cinematic plane. *Friendly Persuasion* by Wyler, *The Hustler* by Rossen, *On the Waterfront* by Kazan, *Paths of Glory* by Kubrick, have enhanced a deep message of humanity and humanism. In the musical, for all the *Gigi's*, or *Les Girls* thrown at the audiences by Hollywood, there is really only one worthy of merit: *West Side Story* by Wise and Robbins, which has been able to go much deeper than the usual treatment of music, songs and dance, bringing forth a composite impression of an anguishing problem such as that represented by the Puerto Ricans in this Nation, and actually carrying home a very subtle point or two. *Twelve Angry Men*, by Lumet, is another film which is meritorious for having provided a lucid example in a new style and having revealed some hidden aspects of intolerance.

Comedy has not been successful, and one could only single out *Some Like It Hot* by Wilder, although at times it borders on sadism, and *Love in the Afternoon* as decent examples; but the lack of vintage Ernst Lubitsch or of vintage Frank Capra has been sadly evident.

The historical epic and the so-called Biblical film have plenty of candidates, but in my opinion only *Spartacus* (the first part of it) may be worthy of preservation. The mammoth screen, the spectacle and the use of 'Ten Thousand Extras, and many more', are frankly an example of the degeneration of a cinematic work into a Barnum-style frenzy.

Hollywood today is reproaching everybody for having failed her, without realising that the main fault of the whole chaotic system of film making in America is entirely hers. The fragmentation of the industry's studios, the elimination of the old ranks in the technicians and producers, the ageing of the stars, have not been counterbalanced by new, dynamic, intelligent approaches. The independent producers have become more and more dependent on the facilities of the studios, and prefer to follow a transitional 'fad', such as the current vogue for Tennessee Williams' castrated, frustrated, impotent or nymphomaniac denizens, in order to cash in on the morbid taste of some segments of the public, rather than initiate a new approach to motion pictures, even if this will mean experimenting and eventually taking a risk. All this provokes a fossilisation, a stasis in the development of creative cinema; such a phenomenon should create the gravest concern in all the interested parties, in view of the dynamism of the cinema all over the world. And yet, nothing is being done to remedy such an appalling state of affairs. A few isolated efforts such as those of Stanley Kramer are met with impatience or a thinly veiled hostility. Entertainment at all costs is the pass-word in Hollywood, and the industry hopes to save herself with the adoption of pay TV, envisaging fat profits, which I doubt will ever materialise.

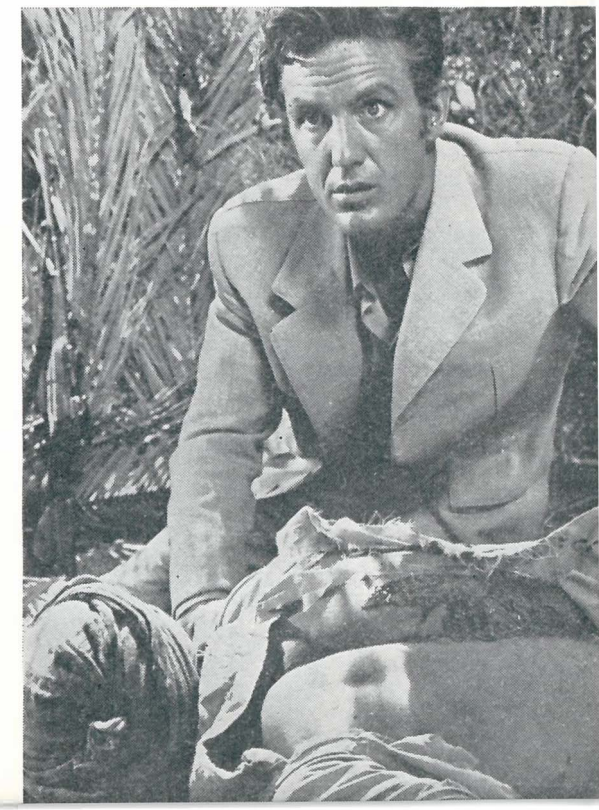
The relationship existing today between the star and the studio, reminds you of the labour conditions in the United States in the past forty years. For decades, the worker had been treated like dirt, with no pension, no insurance plan, no hospitalisation, and had been expected to work as long as twelve or fourteen hours, exploited by a pitiless boss. The growth of the syndicalist movements and of the labour unions, the battles for the rights of the individuals, have culminated today in the opposite absurd of some extremely rich labour unions, where feather-bedding, laziness and at times incommensurate demands for working exigencies' sake are being constantly observed. In the motion pictures field, the star who was under contract and therefore 'owned' by a studio, is instead today exerting his or her whims insofar as the story, director and locale are concerned. The real power, actually, is the star's agent, and this reflects heavily on the ever-increasing costs of production, a factor which has been instrumental in the shooting of more and more pictures overseas, representing a serious matter of concern for the labour force in Hollywood. United Artists, a non-producing outfit, is riding high for its shrewd financing of independent producers and for the distribution of their films, while the large studios are decreasing the production and shaking from top to bottom.

In these circumstances, it seems incredible the film industry does not try to keep in touch with the times and modernise itself. And yet, there is no sign that Hollywood has learned from this lesson, from this decade in which she has relinquished the sceptre of capital of the filmic world. In my opinion, this situation will continue to deteriorate further, and we shall be witnessing in the late Sixties the same desperate efforts to provide the public with Biblical dramas, glossy and vulgar comedies, and increasing amount of musicals characterised by 'much ado about nothing'. The fundamental concept of the articulate use of the screen writer has been lost. More and more Hollywood looks upon literary 'best sellers' or Broadway 'smash hits' in order to revitalise its production schedules; less and less original screen writers are exerting their skills, causing Budd Schulberg to compare recently their status to that of the negroes before the civil war.

To all this may be added the fact that the affluence created by the incessant request of the television monster, always asking for more and more canned programmes, has provided a tranquillity among the factotums of the movie colony. There is no economic crisis, insofar as the workers in films are concerned; they simply work more and more for television, that is all. But what is happening to the motion pictures for theatrical distribution is too serious to be minimised. The situation looks hopeless on the West Coast, since no school of energetic, young directors has come up to the fore. The old glories such as Ford, Hitchcock, Wyler, Huston, Stevens,

● *Kirk Douglas was one star among many in Stanley Kubrick's spectacle, 'Spartacus'*

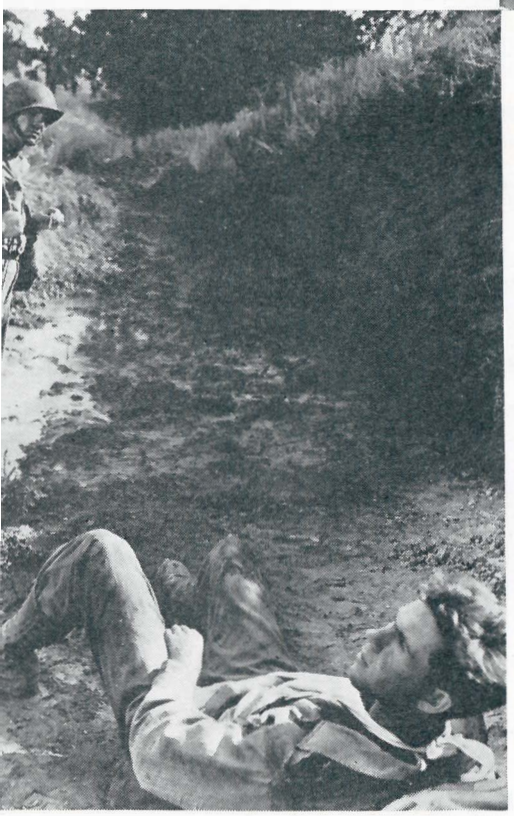
● *Frank Lovejoy, Lloyd Bridges and James Edwards in Mark Robson's 'Home of the Brave' (1949). One of the first Negro problem films.* Below: *Robert Stack was star of the first Hollywood gimmick, 'Bwana Devil' (1953), the film which offered a lion in your lap if you wore rose-coloured spectacles*



remain unchallenged. But Aldrich has faded, Kubrick seems to have been conquered by Hollywoodianism, Brooks and his *Elmer Gantry* (an authentic work of art) are having a difficult time.

Thus one reverts to New York and hope in the new American cinema, the only one that might be able to apply new honest concepts and interpret the new trends in the Nation, trends based on peace and understanding of international and human problems. The new American cinema will ally itself to the young generations, to the public actually exerting its

● *Classic Western pose in Fred Zinnemann's 'High Noon' (1952)—'a hymn to the courage and dedication of an individual as opposed to the cowardly conformist feeling of his neighbours'*



● *Dana Andrews* (above) *was the star of Lewis Milestone's 'A Walk in the Sun' (1947), one of the many Hollywood films exposing the horrors of war that set the trend for the decade*

Below: *Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis among the girls in Billy Wilder's comedy, 'Some Like it Hot' (1960)*

favour of good foreign pictures. It will start an uphill fight which may take time, but which will surely enrich the cinema with a new series of vital experiences.

In the latest decade, the American cinema has produced a film like *Limelight* by Charles Spencer Chaplin and a mass of shapeless dramas, comedies, musicals, sex and murder stories which have taxed the patience of critics and film-goers alike.

The rhythm of deterioration has followed a well noted physics law, that of the uniformly accelerated motion; in other words, Hollywood is today reaching the bottom of the barrel, in experimenting new ways and means to recapture its lost audiences. From Cinerama to Vistavision, from 3-D to the 'Aroma-Rama' process, all the gimmicks have been tried. But the sickness retains all its virulence. Regardless of all the economic, socio-political and organisational, administrative and labour problems, Hollywood is confronted with the ultimate: quality. And the quality in its films has been slipping off badly, thus stressing the force of arguments of the prophets of doom. Lately there have been voices in the Congress of the United States lamenting that American films are continuing to portray the American reality in form of a stereotyped 'American dream'. To this, Hollywood reacts screaming murder at the 'socialistic encroachments on freedom of expression' from the Federal Government, easily forgetting that her responsibility is not only to the audiences, on an international level, but to all those who believe in the mission of the Film.

In this state of animated suspension there is not much hope in a complete revamping of the whole structure on the West Coast. And, here again, I come back to the efforts and struggles of the exponents of the new American cinema, who should attain their momentum and increase their influence on the national and international scene. Unfortunately they are still divided and do not possess a fundamental unity of purpose in achieving their goal, which is to rejuvenate a senile giant.

The systems of distribution and exhibition are still anchored to archaic dogmas, and films of the new cinema encounter a great deal of difficulties for exhibition. Moreover, many of the 'official' critics are still keeping aloof, preferring not to take risks and concentrating patiently instead on the reviews of the Hollywood products. But the new ferments agitating at the surface in New York are undoubtedly the symptoms of something new and vital which will find in due time—soon, I hope—the proper way for its total acknowledgment.

The situation of the new American cinema might be compared, under certain conditions, to that of the 'off-Broadway theatre', which started its activity about seven or eight years ago, among the hostility of the official Broadway theatre. Today, after many struggles, 'off-Broadway' is correctly identified with the only creative form of theatre existing in the United States, counter-opposed by the vulgarity and commercialism of the official Broadway legitimate theatre, which is drowning in an ocean of tasteless musicals, of gaudy comedies, of stupid melodramas.

It is quite possible that in the near future the new American cinema will be able to impose itself and to contribute at last to the progress of the cinematic art. Today we are observing the convulsions of an industry in California which has nothing else to say, which has too many times weathered storms of different proportions and intensities, but which is actually characterised by a lack of new ideals.

After MacCarthyism and Nixonism, after the Birchites's offensives, the American screen should not possibly consign its audiences to the men with the 'necktie salesmen's mentality' to quote a favourite expression of the late Gabriel Pascal. The talents of the new American cinema must save the cinema from this state of impasse. As things stand now, the only other alternative is the end in terms of creative work.

While MGM is expanding into the hotel business, while other studios make deals with book publishers and department stores to promote their canned 'masterpieces', the men and women of the new American cinema believe in converting their dreams and feelings into cinematic expression, without any compromise. This state of mind, a healthy one indeed, must bear fruit, for the actual trend is exclusively based on the true portrayal of our neurotic times, and of our anguishing problems. This is no time for escapism, but for the stimulation of the vital mission of the film. And time, to be sure, is of the most precious essence. In cinema, like in everything else constructive in life, it is running out fast on all of us.

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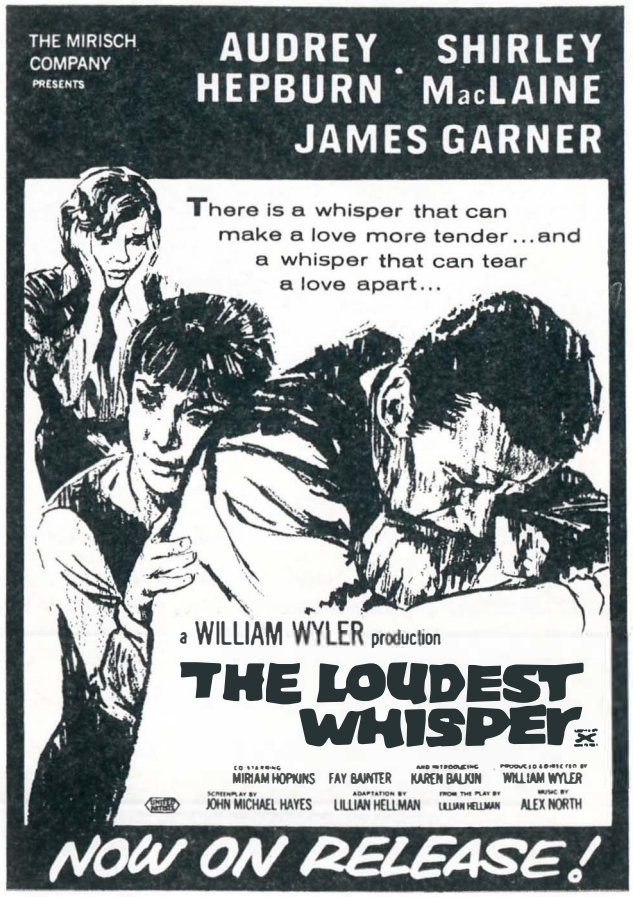
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world production guide

DIRECTOR	TITLE	STARS	NOTES
			BRITAIN
Basil Dearden	*The Mind Benders*	Dirk Bogarde Mary Ure	*Screenplay by Janet Green and John McCormick on the subject of brainwashing*
Daniel Petrie	*Summer Flight*	Susan Hayward Michael Craig Edward Judd	*Remake of* Dark Victory. *Screenplay by Jessamyn West Produced by Stuart Miller and Lawrence Turman*
Carol Reed	*The Running Man*	Laurence Harvey Lee Remick Alan Bates	*Suspense drama about insurance fraud Screenplay by John Mortimer, based on novel by Shelley Smith. Produced by Reed for Columbia*
Robert Stevens	*In The Cool of the Day*	Peter Finch Jane Fonda Angela Lansbury	*Romantic drama from the novel by Susan Ertz Produced by John Houseman for* MGM
Henry Levin	*The Friendliest Girls in the World*	Carl Boehm, Dolores Hart Pamela Tiffin, Karl Malden	*Produced by Anatole de Grunwald for* MGM
Cliff Owen	*The Wrong Arm of the Law*	Peter Sellers Nanette Newman	*Produced by Aubrey Baring for British Lion*
			USA
John Ford	*Donovan's Reef*	John Wayne, Lee Marvin Dorothy Lamour	*Produced by Ford for Paramount. Shooting in Hawaii*
Delbert Mann	*A Gathering of Eagles*	Rock Hudson, Mary Peach Rod Taylor	*Story of modern day Air Force. Produced by Sy Bartlett for Universal*
Frank Tashlin	*The Man From The Diners' Club*	Danny Kaye, Martha Hyer Cara Williams	*Comedy produced by William Bloom for Columbia*
Delmer Daves	*Spencer's Mountain*	Henry Fonda Maureen O'Hara James MacArthur	*Modern western shooting in Wyoming. Produced by Daves for Warners*
Stanley Kramer	*It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*	Spencer Tracy, Ethel Merman Milton Berle	*All-star comedy produced by Kramer. Newly-developed optical effects will enable this to be shown in Cinerama*
Robert Aldrich	*What Ever Happened to Baby Jane*	Bette Davis, Joan Crawford Anna Lee	*Suspense drama about two sisters, both ex-stars Produced by Aldrich for Warners*
			FRANCE
Jean-Pierre Melville	*Le Doulos*	Jean-Paul Belmondo Serge Reggiani Rene Lefevre	*Thriller about a police informer. Produced by Rome Paris Films*
Marc Allegret	*L'Abominable Homme des Douanes*	Darry Cowl, Pierre Brasseur Francis Blanche	*Produced by Ege Films and Felix Films Shooting in Marseilles*
Andre Cayatte	*Le Glaive et la Balance*	Anthony Perkins Jean-Claude Brialy Pascale Audret	*Produced by Gaumont International (Paris) Trianon Productions, Ultra Films (Rome)*
			ITALY
Luchino Visconti	*The Leopard*	Burt Lancaster Alain Delon Claudia Cardinale	*Based on the novel by Guiseppe di Lampedusa. Produced in colour by Goffredo Lombardo for Titanus-20th Century-Fox Cameraman, Rotunno*
Vittorio De Sica	*The Condemned of Altona*	Sophia Loren Maximilian Schell Fredric March	*Script by Zavattini from Sartre's Play Produced by Carlo Ponti for Titanus-20th Century-Fox*
			WESTERN GERMANY
Jurgen Goslar	90 *Minuten nach Mitternacht*	Christian Doermer Christine Kaufmann Martin Held	*Cameraman, Klaus von Rautenfeld Shooting in Munich*
Rolf Thiele	*Das Schwarz-weib-rote Himmelbett*	Nadja Tiller, Martin Held Margot Hielscher	*Produced by Ilse Lotz-Dupont, photographed by Heinz Schnackertz. Shooting in Munich*

TAXILES

Tax-wise it's best to be an exile. Taxiles are the silent Americans who come and go, not with production schedules, but within or without the fiscal year

INSIDE THE USA
by William Fadiman

In years gone by Hollywood was never noted for its knowledge or appreciation of what Carlyle called 'the dismal science' of economics. Living and working in a world of manufactured illusion, it was quite content to leave such mundane matters as money, taxes, and so on in the hands of attorneys, business managers, personal representatives, tax counsellors, and their ilk. Since motion picture contracts refer to the employee signatories as 'artists', Hollywood abided by this flattering fiction, and the conversation of the guests at social gatherings formerly focused on such topics of shattering moment as the high gross of their last picture, the low gross of everyone else's last picture, the number of Rolls Royces gracing the portico of the Hillcrest Country Club (now 19 according to the latest survey by the proud doorman), the most recent sex-sizzle, which film executive was 'in', which film executive was 'out', the ignorance of critics, the stupidity of preview audiences, the stupidity of producers, the stupidity of writers, the stupidity of stars, the stupidity of directors, the stupidity of everyone who disagreed with the speaker.

But with the advent of ever new and mounting taxes, a profound interest in the intricacies of finance is evident among Hollywood's 'artists'. No longer is their dinner table talk devoted exclusively to film industry rumours and personal gossip. No longer do they tolerate the occasional conference with the tax advisor as a necessary but irksome interruption in their social and business lives. On the contrary, his visit is now solicited, his advice eagerly sought.

Strangely enough this new absorption in finance runs parallel to an intense concern with geography. For Hollywood has discovered Europe. However, this is not the Europe of the traveller, the art lover, the gourmet or the culture seeker. There is scarcely a scintilla of interest in the Grand Canal or the Parthenon or the Cotswold country or the Appian Way. The conversation centres on another Europe entirely, a Europe which might well be called the Tax Conscious Hollywoodite's Home Away From Home.

Coupled with this fervent fascination with a Europe not mentioned in any guide book is an equal concentration and even expertise on Section 911 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 which contains the tax ruling dealing with 'earned income from sources outside the United States.' . . . Martin says you pay only three per cent if you maintain a residence in Lausanne . . . Kingmetal said the other night that Lichtenstein is only good if you invest in some enterprise there. What do they make in Lichtenstein, anyway? . . . Bendel believes that Andorra is by far the most co-operative . . . Guypelson assured me that if I sold everything including the Facel Vega I could come back after three years with a small fortune . . . 510 days out of 18 months; that's not too bad . . . what the hell does a bona fide residence mean? . . . but that only exempts the first 20,000 dollars! . . . can I deduct what I make in Italy from the taxes I pay here? . . . am I self-employed even if I have a corporation? . . . you mean I have to give up membership in my golf club? You're kidding!

Tax-talk: serious, meaningful, important, all thoroughly consonant with the laws of the United States.

President Kennedy's recent message to Congress emphasising the need for a 'revision of the tax treatment of foreign income, to remove defects and inequities in the law' has dramatically under-scored the advisability of such conversation and deliberations. Whereas the current laws allow an American citizen who establishes a bona fide residence abroad a complete exemption on his foreign earnings, the new proposals state that only 20,000 dollars of each year's foreign earnings would be immune from taxation during the first three years of foreign residence and then 35,000 dollars per year after that. The House Ways and Means Committee has already voted tentative approval of these recommendations and the administration is determined to make every effort to ensure Congressional confirmation.

Whether or not Congress will implement the President's suggested measures is as yet uncertain, although the auguries are good that it will do so. What is alarming and disturbing the motion picture industry is that the nation is convinced that the only beneficiaries from these rulings, which have been variously labelled 'tax loopholes' and 'tax havens', are the stars of the film business. Nearly all of the newspapers and magazines reporting on President Kennedy's plans for these tax reforms consistently and persistently refer to the current legislation under review as 'movie star provisions' or statutes for 'movie stars operating abroad'. To the public it is Hollywood alone which has found financial relief and comfort from these regulations.

It has long since been forgotten that the origin of the tax leniency expressed in Section 911 was inspired by a logical desire to provide financial encouragement to those Americans whose jobs carried them overseas for extended periods under climatic, residential and working conditions of genuine hardship and duress. It has also been forgotten that these same Americans in foreign lands have had their original numbers swollen by hundreds, if not thousands, of additional officers, administrators, executives, and clerical personnel as American investments abroad have multiplied. There are numerous large scale industries utilising a far greater number of employees than the film industry which have benefited from the much quoted Section 911. But the American public is largely unaware of their existence. To that public a handful of American film stars are the only ones who derive important aid and advantages from this tax remission.

Hollywood Tax Exile remains a much more provocative headline than Oil Tax Exile or Aircraft Tax Exile. Since Hollywood stars possess a ready made news value, the newspapers delight in printing stories of the large (and usually inaccurate) sums saved by these celebrities as a result of this tax ruling. This in turn invites further obloquy on film performers as being somehow especially and arbitrarily endowed by the government with a status justifiably repugnant to our way of life, the status of Special Privilege. The intramural murmurings by film unions about 'runaway productions' in Europe and 'flights from America' fall into an entirely different category. This involves the diminution of jobs in Hollywood and is a separate problem.

Curiously enough, the vituperation leveled at those stars who have established residence outside of the United States can be directly ascribed to the film industry itself and its bizarre concept of public relations. Before Hollywood protests too violently against the shock waves of condemnation from press and forum alike, it would be wise to look into its own mirror for the instigator of this ugly public image. Via interviews, statements, press releases, and so on, Hollywood is constantly flaunting its personal tax and revenue banners in the presence of its fascinated public. Hollywood can hardly wait to announce the annual income of a star living abroad and his consequent tax saving. The corporate and individual egos of the members of the motion picture industry are so exaggerated, their sense of reality so distorted, their dependence upon the public's familiarity with their activities so essential, that they frequently lose sight of all discretion and prudence in their headlong devotion to 'show-

manship' for its own sake. 'I don't care what is said about me, as long as they spell my name right,' is a local adage cheerfully and thoughtlessly accepted by most film makers.

Very few, if any, major business institutions deliberately publicise the earnings of their personnel; Hollywood makes banner headlines of them. There is an ancient self-complacent wheeze in Hollywood, 'Every man has two businesses, his own and the motion picture business.' The American film industry seems to have taken this feeble joke quite literally and decided that all of America should be made aware of the remuneration received by its principal members. Nor is it content to divulge the actual figures. To ensure sufficient prominence for their publicity-hungry clients Hollywood press agents invariably aggrandise all their exploits and undertakings, including their salary quotations, to a point of absurdity. It is this regrettable tendency to advertise in extravagant, grandiose terms what in other organisations would be ordinary or confidential corporate reports that has become a boomerang in the embarrassed face of Hollywood as the present tax investigation is being pursued.

It is true that Hollywood workers live in a perpetual spotlight; but it is a spotlight wielded, directed, and controlled by themselves. Consequently Hollywood is often a surprised victim of its own press agentry, and nowhere has this been proven more unpleasantly true than in the current condemnation of its high salaried employees abroad.

Do not misunderstand. This is not a crocodile tear for the financial woes of the American film stars in Geneva or Lausanne. But too few Americans appreciate how short-lived the careers and earning power of screen actors are. An actor's compensation and acceptance are largely dependent upon that most fickle weapon of fate, the varying and variable tastes of his public. Few remember the stars who were catapulted into fame and fortune only to vanish into almost total obscurity with equal suddenness. Few realise that the fabulous sum received by a film star at the zenith of his career may never be repeated and that it is drastically reduced by taxation. Few know the huge taxes paid the government by most celebrated actors whereas many know their huge salaries cited in the press. Few people outside the film industry are aware that it has now become a global institution and that European production is at an all-time high, thus offering opportunities for earning a living that are declining in a Hollywood confronted with the powerful threat of television.

The moral and ethical question implicit in the decision of an American to live and work abroad are certainly areas of controversy not easily dismissed. Living in a commodious Swiss chalet and working in Paris are hardly in keeping with the original intent of the law which assumed onerous and oppressive conditions as concomitants of being employed outside of America. However, this is equally true of the banking or the oil company employee on foreign soil. Whether or not any United States citizen in a foreign land should be able to receive taxation benefits which are denied his fellow workers in America is obviously a problem that cannot be ignored. Unfortunately, a discussion of this moot point does not lie within the purview of this article. Perhaps the most effective answer will be provided by Congress when it curtails or repeals a number of these benefits applicable to all industries. Nevertheless it should be made manifest to the American public that the film stars in Switzerland are exercising rights — not privileges — granted them by the laws of their country, and that moreover, they are not by any means the only beneficiaries of this legally permissible procedure. It is important to realise that they are not transgressors or malefactors. Any attack upon them should better be directed at the legislation which permits this practice—as President Kennedy is now doing—rather than at the individuals who profit from it, even if they happen to be film stars. The fact—and it is a fact—that the United States government granted its citizens this dispensation (and film stars are citizens, too!) as an integral part of their constitutional rights is an item that is rarely mentioned in the spate of news about Hollywood.

It is obvious that reforms in these laws are inevitable and required. However, if Hollywood wishes to retain a public image less subject to assault and denunciation, it would do well to curb its unbridled desire for publicity at any cost, unless it wishes to incur the penalty of public disapproval and disapprobation as it has in this instance. It is Hollywood's own unregimented fanfare which feeds this growing antagonism; it is time the film colony realised this and ceased being hurt or astonished at censure and recrimination by its own customers in an area which Hollywood itself has either created or fostered, or both.

Ugly and beautiful Americans

by George Fenin

Ron Rice, a young filmmaker of the New American Cinema, has shown at the New York Charles Theatre—the arena for experimental films—his *Flower Thief*, a vehement, plotless, symbolic and deliberately obscure opus. The hero is a gentle lunatic and rebel carrying his most precious treasures, a stolen gardenia, an American flag and a teddy bear, who is mocked by poets in a bar, persecuted by a giant and crucified on a flagpole by a bunch of so-called 'patriots'.

Puzzling and ambiguous at its best, the film nevertheless contains many valuable expressions of a creative and anti-conformistic mind. It warrants a close examination, partly because of the undoubtedly exciting visual response which it generates. Add this to the already conspicuous number of anti-traditionalist films, which are striving for something new in the cinema.

Another debutant in moviemaking is Rick Carrier, a former publicist, who has directed *Strangers in the City*, a picture dedicated to the Puertorican problem in New York and to the life of these new immigrants. On the basis of his original story, Carrier has tried to show the tragedy that falls upon one Puertorican family in a crescendo of terrible events: the young son loses his job and is beaten by hoodlums, the young daughter is raped and her mother stabs the violator, dying subsequently in a freak accident, and the father commits suicide. The apparent melodramatic pile-up of such tragedies might lead one to believe that Carrier has emphasised too much a series of gloomy destinies; the

● *'Strangers in the City' is proof that a young film-maker, Rick Carrier, has talent. The strangers are the Puertoricans in New York*

cinematic description of the Spanish Harlem borough, with its dilapidated houses and its rats, the rubble strewn all around and the desperation of the inhabitants has been done in stark and effective terms, in a quasi-documentary fashion. This 'first' is to be commended with the hope that Carrier will do something better later on, for he has proven that he possesses enough talent for the task.

Black Fox, a documentary by Louis Clyde Stoumen, of *The Naked Eye* and *The True Story of the Civil War* fame, has had a midnight showing at the New Yorker Theatre on the eve of the film's departure for Italy. This film has been partially based on the XII Century's folk tale *Reynard the Fox* and tries to establish an analogy between the fox and the life of Adolf Hitler, using a technique in depth, with old photos, films and prints. The commentary, extremely apt, is by Marlene Dietrich, and constitutes one of the best assets of this work. It is perhaps the finest work of an American filmmaker dealing with Nazi bestiality.

Among the new projects I would note that Arthur Penn, the stage and screen director of *The Miracle Worker*, will shoot *The Death of Bessie Smith*, the one-act play by Edward Albee, which had a great critical success off-Broadway two seasons ago. The film will be made in New York in the fall.

The United States Information Agency has decided to help young film-makers in preparing a series of documentaries. This field had been sadly neglected since the end of the excellent postwar social documentaries made under the auspices of the Federal Government, during the Roosevelt administration.

The most interesting production from Universal for next season will be *Freud*, directed by John Huston and filmed mostly in Vienna, with some interior scenes at the Bavaria Studios in Munich. This is not a biography of the father of psychoanalysis, but an accurate study of the most crucial years of his life. Huston, who in 1943 made the documentary *Let There Be Light* dedicated to psycho-neurotic soldiers discharged from the Army, had always caressed the idea to bring to the screen the personality of Sigmund Freud and of his fantastic struggle against the obscurantism of many scientists. He stated recently: 'In *Freud* we have the fortunate wedding of material and medium. Don't get the impression that because it deals with psychiatry it is mental and static. Actually, it is a real thriller, a mystery story in which every viewer will find that he is experiencing something of his own life. And it is full of action—despite the fact that most of the action occurs beyond the eyeballs. It is my belief that film unwinding from a reel is closer to the human thought processes than any other medium. And nothing moves as swiftly as thought'.

Montgomery Clift in the exacting rôle of Freud, Susannah York as Cecily Koertner (a character into which most of Freud's celebrated cases have been injected), Larry Parks, Eric Portman and Susan Kohner comprise an interesting cast. Since the critical acclaim of *A Far Country* on the Broadway stage a couple of seasons ago, a definite popular interest has been established for a good work dedicated to psychoanalysis.

Another interesting work in production, also for Universal, is *The Ugly American*, adapted by scenarist Stewart Stern from the widely read book by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick. Marlon Brando has the rôle of Harrison Carter MacWhite, the newly appointed us ambassador to the mythical country of Sarkhan in Southeast Asia. In the cast are also Sandra Church, who played the rôle of burlesque queen Gypsy Rose Lee in the musical *Gypsy* on Broadway, and Eiji Okada, of *Hiroshima, Mon Amour* fame, Jocelyn Brando (Marlon's sister, who starred with Henry Fonda in the play *Mr Roberts*), Pat Hingle, Arthur Hill and Reiko Sato.

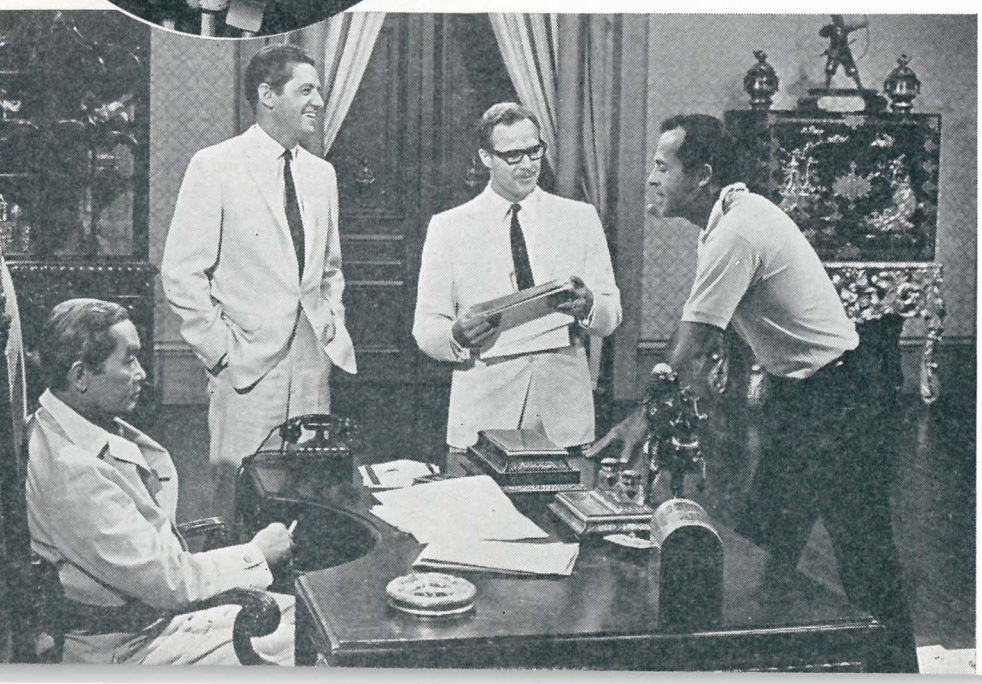
Second unit location work was filmed in Thailand. Kukrit Pramoj, formerly minister of finance in the Thai government, was special technical consultant and also had the rôle of Kwen Sai, Sarkhan's prime minister. Director George Englund, who produced *The World, the Flesh and the Devil* with Harry Belafonte, has a very challenging task in conveying to the screen one of the most widely discussed and controversial books concerning the pitfalls and the pathetic absurdities of us diplomacy and policy in the Southeast, an area which is a flashpoint in world affairs. An ambitious project, *The Ugly American* will doubtless be another *tour de force* for Marlon Brando, who makes his comeback in a non-costume rôle after several years in picturesque garbs—latest in *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

George Stevens and Stanley Kramer are to produce their latest films in Cinerama. The first will be Kramer's *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad, World* and then the George Stevens production of *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. United Artists will release both films.

The Kramer film is expected to be released in the autumn of 1963 with the Stevens' picture appearing in the spring of 1964. 'The enormous possibilities of Cinerama', Stevens said, 'beyond the initial excitement of the great Cinerama screen, have not yet been fully explored and I am sure that in the future we will see the whole subtlety and complexity of the motion picture at its best on the Cinerama screen. The opportunity is there and we are most excited at the prospect of bringing our films to world audiences with these possibilities before us.'

Stevens has screened some footage from the Stanley Kramer picture and some experiments which he had made in the new process including a 33 foot high close-up of Max Van Sydow as the figure of Christ.

Super-Cinerama is being developed for both films in conjunction with Ultra-Panavision.



● *Marlon Brando goes into politics in 'The Ugly American'. He plays a newly appointed US ambassador to a country in South East Asia.*

Left: Marlon Brando with sister Jocelyn, who has a part in his new film.

Below: Director George Englund (right) with Brando, Arthur Hill and Kukrit Pramoj (formerly minister of finance in the Thai government) preparing a scene in the Prime Minister's office

Cool man by Barrie Pattison

The technicians making *In The Cool of the Day* cleared the path for the camera like the villains in a Thomas Ince western cleared a path for the entrance of Billy Hart. They were rehearsing a complex manoeuvre typical of the film's director, Robert Stevens. This is the second film that Stevens has directed for MGM at Borehamwood studios, and as before he is replacing the usual coverage of a scene with carefully planned individual set-ups. These flexible groupings and exactly timed camera movements are a demanding way of working, but Stevens feels more confident here than with his previous *I Thank A Fool*. He had only two months to prepare the latter film, but has worked on *In The Cool of the Day* for a year.

The unit recently returned from Greece, where Stevens shot some location material. This will be used in the latter half of the film, when the sunlit settings will reflect the central character's escape from his desperate situation. The script, by Meade Roberts, has been adapted from the novel by Susan Ertz. The cast is headed by Peter Finch, Angela Lansbury, Jane Fonda, Arthur Hill, Alexander Knox and Constance Cummings.

Finch plays a publishing executive who is largely responsible for an accident that killed his three-year-old son and left his wife permanently disfigured. He meets the dangerously ill wife of a friend, and the film deals with this 'contact between a dying girl and a man who is already dead'. Much of the impact comes from the realism with which these two are treated. Their guilt and selfishness are shown, giving their relationship unusual conviction.

Stevens and producer John Houseman see the subject as a strange love story not unlike the work of Henry James. A few years ago Stevens and Houseman handled James' *Wings of the Dove* in the celebrated Playhouse 90 series on American television.

John Houseman's first producing was done for the theatre. He worked on Broadway before forming the Mercury Theatre project with Orson Welles. With Welles he moved into radio, and the famous 'Invaders from Mars' programme. On live television he produced *Sorry, Wrong Number* directed by Nicholas Ray, and produced Ray's films *They Live By Night* and *On Dangerous Ground*. He went on to work with Ophuls and Mercury writer Howard Koch on *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, with Mankiewicz on *Julius Caesar*, Lang on *Moonfleet* and Frankenheimer on *All Fall Down* (which featured another terrifyingly brilliant Angela Lansbury characterisation). He has worked with Minnelli on *The Bad and the Beautiful*, *The Cobweb*, *Lust for Life* and the current *Two Weeks in Another Town*.

One of the most successful men in his field, even Houseman spoke of the frustrations of a system which could impose unsuitable screen ratios or throw away a finished picture with the wrong exploitation.

New to the production ranks is Stanley Baker, who till now has been known as an actor. He is also familiar with the frustrations of the film business. He cited *Helen of Troy*, which had become another ordinary spectacle film when divided between two temperaments as contrasted as Raoul Walsh and Robert Wise. In another of his films, *The Angry Hills*, Robert Aldrich's idea of showing a situation where the characteristics of the hero and villain were reversed was watered down. (He also commented that in Britain, unlike France, this type of action film was automatically assumed to be insignificant.) It is to avoid this sort of situation that Baker intends to take an active part in production.

He is interested in Alun Owen's TV play *No Trams to Lime Street*, and *The Strip*, which Anthony Quinn and he wish to make. He is also hoping to film *Ceremony*, a script by Ben Barzman showing the degrading of a character's motives under pressure. Baker's immediate production is to be *Zulu* for Joe Levine. This is the story of an historic incident when little more than a hundred men stood off the attack of a thousand natives. A challenging subject, and Baker's problem will be to avoid the conventional extremes, either historical spectacle or a mere re-statement of the colour problem.

Baker's current film, *The Man Who Finally Died*, is being directed by a television recruit, Quentin Lawrence, who worked his way through the technical side of television to become one of its most successful producers. Although television is usually considered a training ground for the cinema, Lawrence has found that film work has given him a greater insight into the needs of the small screen. This is his first major film and he aims at an atmospheric thriller set against a sinister, authentic European background.

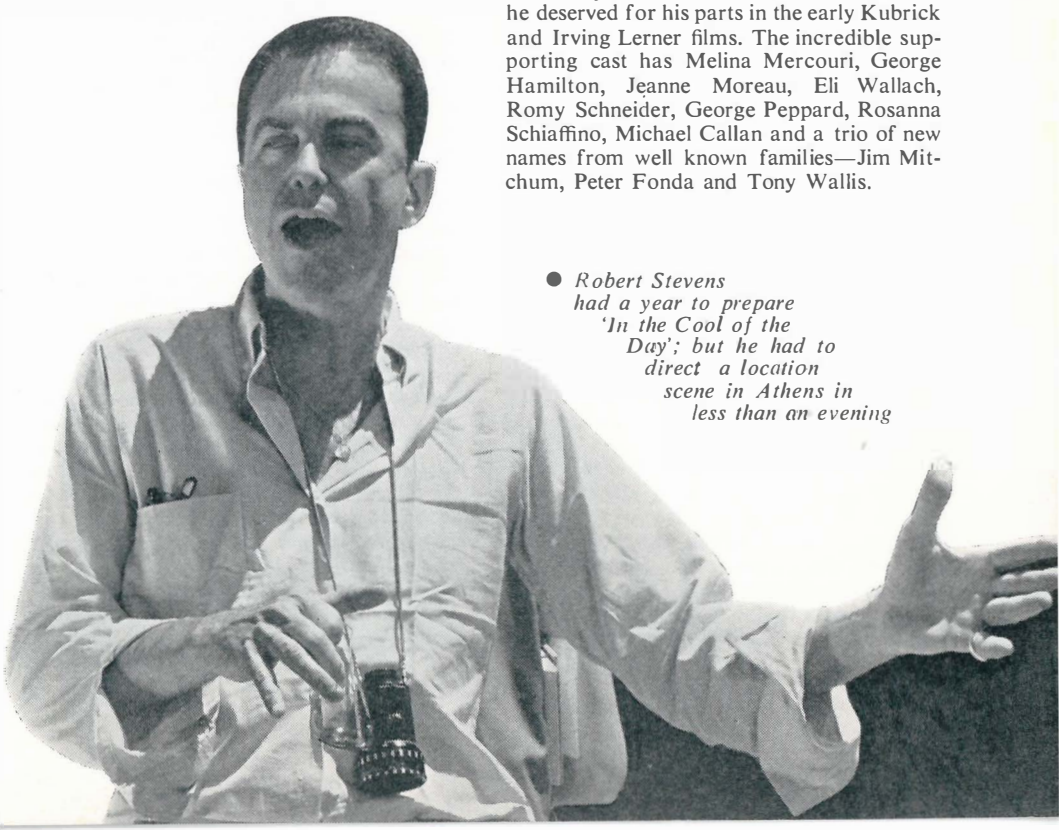
The film has a strong cast including Mai Zetterling, Eric Portman, Peter Cushing, Georgina Ward, Niall McGinnis and Nigel Green. Photography is by Stephen Dade, script by Louis Marks and Lewis Greifer, and the film is produced by Norman Williams for the newly formed Magna film Distributors.

Another of these new distribution outfits is Hal Chester's Albion Films. Chester sees this as a way of having greater freedom in choosing subjects. He remembers when the distributor trimmed the devil worshipper footage from his remarkable *Night of the Demon*.

Chester's career has been spotted with a number of these intelligent small budget pictures, like the award winning *The Bold and the Brave* or its little known follow-up *Crashout*. Working on the scripts of many of these he is particularly conscious of the problem of audience identification—the difficulty of finding sympathy with the criminal heroes of *Crashout* or his projected *Tombola*. This is an extraordinary subject set among the deserters, thieves and whores who formed their own community after the second world war.

Albion's first film, *Hide and Seek*, recalls Chester's *School for Scoundrels*, with another little-man hero again played by Ian Carmichael. Co-starring with Janet Munro, Hugh Griffith and George Pravda, Carmichael plays a Walter Mitty character with a secret life stage managed by Curt Jurgens. This actor, who never seems to make two films running in the same language, is also a director with half a dozen features to his credit, his favourite still being the expressionist *Premium on Death* with Dr Caligari himself, Werner Krause in the lead.

At Shepperton Carl Foreman is writing, producing and directing *The Victors*. The cast is headed by Vince Edwards whose career as Ben Casey seems to have won him the attention he deserved for his parts in the early Kubrick and Irving Lerner films. The incredible supporting cast has Melina Mercouri, George Hamilton, Jeanne Moreau, Eli Wallach, Romy Schneider, George Peppard, Rosanna Schiaffino, Michael Callan and a trio of new names from well known families—Jim Mitchum, Peter Fonda and Tony Wallis.



● *Robert Stevens had a year to prepare 'In the Cool of the Day'; but he had to direct a location scene in Athens in less than an evening*

France

Too Common Market

by Ian Dallas

● *Andre Cayatte (now finishing work on 'Le glaive et la balance', with Pascale Audret and Jacques Monod) won the Venice festival's top prize for 'Passage du Rhin' two years ago*

As I write, Paris has its summer heatwave. The papers and magazines are full of pictures of stars and directors on holiday—mostly at St Tropez—but there's enough activity in the studios, even if the French film industry *is* undergoing yet another of its crises. This time it concerns film aid.

Under a Common Market agreement France and Italy had agreed to do away with governmental aid (the German industry had never had it, apart from a detaxation on quality product). Now Italy has decided not to take present action in view of the increased production in Italy and its developing export trade. This continuation has angered the French, who looked forward to the day (1967) when aid, by gradual reductions, would be changed from percentages to a new form of bank loans and aid for 'quality' product. The French resent that by bucking the signed agreement the Italians will take more of the world market, which the producers need as cinema attendance diminishes in France. There was a general feeling that as Italian-French co-production increases aid would no longer be necessary, and the government might then relax the heavy taxes on film admissions. There has been a partial reduction recently, but it only applies to certain cinemas, and the exhibitors are demanding more in order to combat the threat from television. The Common Market is getting all too common. Ways are being studied to cut the cost of production, and there has been much discussion as to whether it is more profitable to produce films for *le grand public* or for the art cinemas abroad. In fact, whether it is more profitable to finance the *ancienne* or the *nouvelle vague*. Many so-called new wave pictures have failed miserably, but the best of them have done fine business round the world. This is not true of the old wave's films, apart from those starring BB.

However, in August, there were 25 French or co-production films in the course of actual *tournage*. These include Claude Autant-Lara's *Le Meurtrier* (*The Murderer*), from a novel by Patricia Highsmith, with Marina Vlady, Robert Hossein, Maurice Ronet, Gert Froebe and Yvonne Furneaux, and *L'Immortelle*, with Francoise Brion and Jacques Doniol-Valcroze, written and directed by Alain Robbe-Grillet. Alain Resnais, who, with Robbe-Grillet, perpetrated *Marienbad*, is preparing a colour film called *Muriel*, being written by the novelist Jean Cayrol. Love is again the theme and once more in a French film we'll be at the coast, where an older couple, their love having failed, observe the progress of an affair between a younger couple.

La Fontaine is the latest classic writer to get the modernisation treatment—a four part film to be called *Les Quatre Vérités:* Rene Clair is now working on his episode, with Charles Aznavour and Leslie Caron. Hardy Kruger and Anna Karina will also be in this, and the other directors will be Hervé Bromberger, Alessandro Blasetti and Luis Berlanga.

I suppose as long as the French cinema lasts there'll be the omnibus film, and *Les Sept Peches Capitaux* has the doubtful distinction of being a re-make as well, though only its initial idea bears any resemblance to the film of the same title made some ten years ago. This one has been concocted by so many *nouvelle vague* talents that one is tempted to suppose that it looks back to the other with a sort of 'Anything you can do I can do better' attitude. Still, like the other, its parts are not equally successful, though much of it is highly diverting. By general accord the best episode is Jacques Demy's *Lust* from an idea by Roger Peyrefitte, which looks lightly and capriciously at two boys (Laurent Terzieff and Jean-Louis Trintignant) discovering that there is such a thing—by looking at a book of reproductions by Heironymous Bosch. Roger Vadim's *Pride* has generally been described as the worst episode, but it seemed to me a pleasant enough *conte* about a wife (Marina Vlady) who won't run away with her lover (Sammy Frey) when she learns that her husband (Jean-Pierre Aumont) planned to leave her. Eduoard Molinaro's *Envy* has a maid (Dany Saval) longing to be a film-star, and when she achieves this, longing to be a maid; Jean-Luc Godard's *Laziness* capitalises on Eddie Constantine's laziness, and Claude Chabrol's *Greed* has a group of firemen, including Jean-Claude Pascal, Jean-Claude Brialy and Jacques Charrier, running a lottery for an expensive prostitute. Eugene Ionesco wrote *Anger* and Philippe de Broca directed *Gluttony*, but neither is up to much. None of the subjects is treated in as obvious a manner as the older film, and so many sins crop up in each episode that you sometimes wonder which one you're watching.

Claude Chabrol's *Landru*, the story of Bluebeard, is now nearing completion. This is the first original screenplay to be written by Francoise Sagan, who stresses that *Landru* will not be a horror film, but a film of tenderness—decorated now and then with a cadaverous touch. 'This little man killed eleven women, it's true', says Sagan, 'but he was gay and he had charm—the French were captivated. The mention of his name today summons a smile, not disgust. The reasons for his popularity are timeless. He was successful with women though he had more hair on his chin than was left on his head. It was in fact the victory of the man in the street over Tarzan all over again'. The part of Landru is played by Charles Denner, while his victims include Danielle Darrieux, Michele Morgan, Guiletta Massina, Hildegarde Neff and Juliette Mayniel.

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Sicilian Hollywood

by John Francis Lane

This seems to have been truly 'Sicilian year' for the Italian cinema. As a film correspondent stationed in Rome I have found myself winging to Sicily three times in the past few months. The first time I attended a special screening of Rosi's exciting *Salvatore Giuliano* in the main square of Montelepre, the bandit's home village. In July I was back in Palermo and the nearby countryside to visit Visconti at work on *The Leopard*. At the end of the same month I was in Taormina and Messina for the 'film rally' with which these two towns keep us aware every summer that Sicilians love the cinema, film stars and—maybe—even film critics.

Sicily is going to love the cinema a good deal more in the years to come now that Goffredo Lombardo, the energetic head of Titanus, has decided to build a Sicilian Hollywood. By 1964 he will have built a vast production studio lot at the seaside near Palermo. Says Lombardo 'We have selected Sicily for this new production centre because experience has shown us that it's an ideal place for making motion pictures. It has a near-perfect climate enabling us to shoot outdoors virtually all year long, it has an abundance of land and labour and it is accessible by land, sea and air, being only an hour's flight from Rome.'

The Titanus-Sicilia company intends to open a school near Palermo for training technicians amongst the Sicilians. This is perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the whole project as this island, for all its natural beauties, has so little to offer its population in terms of work. Most of the industrial development that has taken place in Sicily in the last two years or so has been over on the other side of the island. Indeed, Catania will soon be the third city of Italy in terms of population and industrial development. (While in Catania I visited Aci Trezza, the impoverished fishing village of Visconti's *La Terra Trema* and found it flourishing: it is now a sort of Sicilian Portofino). But over in the Palermo area, things are very different. One finds stubbornness, and unwillingness to move with the times. Here we are still in the mood of the Bourbons, and it was interesting in this light to see Visconti re-creating the Sicily of a hundred years ago, just after the Bourbons had been thrown out.

Archie Colquhoun is writing elsewhere in this issue about his impressions of Visconti's film version of the novel by Lampedusa. I will say simply that watching Lancaster at work with Visconti confirmed my impressions from Rome, namely that this actor is to be greatly admired for his courage in tackling such a difficult rôle and also for the intelligence with which he has devoted himself to the task (and the humility which he shows in working under Visconti—for all his fame as an actor and producer, Lancaster gives the impression that he is a young actor making his debut).

Titanus and Fox are investing a lot of money in *The Leopard* (Fox, incidentally, and not Universal, bought the American distribution rights of *The Last Days of Sodom and Gommorah*, that other Titanus opus, while Rank will distribute it in most other countries. Fox are also backing another current Titanus production, in collaboration with Ponti, the De Sica directed *Condemned of Altona* which has just completed shooting at the Tirrenia Studios).

The first Titanus-Sicilia production will be directed by Ermanno Olmi who made *Il Posto*. Olmi, a Northerner, will move South to treat a human problem not so very different from that of his first film, but this time the young man will be a Sicilian. Olmi is very popular in Sicily at the moment. He won the Donatello David as Best Director of last year. These 'Davids', although awarded by the chic International Film Club, are handed over during the Taormina-Messina Festival. I liked *Il Posto* although I feel it is the wrong type of approach to social problems: it is in the tradition of early neo-realism, though treated with more technical flamboyance. Indeed, the sort of cinema that reached its highest point with De Sica's *Umberto D* didn't need directorial showing-off. The *new* Italian Cinema reaches towards realism without the *neo*. *Il Posto* was preferred to *Accattone* in London (at the National Film Theatre Festival last year) as with the voters for the Donatello David. Yet these same voters could have given their award to Rosi for *Giuliano* or Germi for *Divorzio all'Italiana* (that they didn't vote for *The Eclipse* is understandable, Antonioni having got the 'David' last year for *La Notte*). I can understand the International Film Club members liking the pathetic rosy realism of *Il Posto*, but I was amazed to learn that even the Sicilian Film Societies had preferred Olmi to Rosi or Germi. It would have been a courageous move indeed for young Sicilians to show their appreciation of either of these two directors who had treated their island with such profound sensibility. But perhaps they are too Sicilian to be objective about it. It is ironical, anyway, that at Saint Vincent in the North, the annual award for Best Director went to Rosi, the Southerner. A question of extremes obviously. And a very telling reflection on Italian geographical divergences.

The other 'Davids' were very much a question of dividing up the cake amongst the various companies, the production award being divided between De Laurentiis for the Sordi film *It's A Hard Life* and Rizzoli for *Mondo Cane*.

As one was almost begged not to mention the films shown at this 'festival' I will only too gratefully refrain from doing so. The less said the better, anyway, about Dassin's *Phaedre*. I'm surprised that the Greek Gods didn't re-emerge from the bowels of the theatre in Taormina and voice their protest. The only other film that I feel bound to mention was Rossellini's *Anima Nera*, adapted (though not very much real 'adaptation' was done) from a play by Giuseppe Patroni Griffi, one of Italy's few talented young dramatists (he has just directed a film himself, *Il Mare*, to be shown in the Informative Section at Venice). One would have thought that after *Vanina Vanina* no producer would have let Rossellini make another film. The French, though, still take Rossellini seriously as a director and therefore offer an attraction for a distributor. Truffaut, it is well known, considers Rossellini his master (and the director of *Jules et Jim* rejects Antonioni completely). I shall be amazed if even Rossellini's most loyal admirers find anything to like about *Anima Nera*.

Rossellini showed his inability to film a theatrical text some years ago with *La Voix Humaine* which even the art of Anna Magnani failed to bring alive. With the Patroni Griffi play, he has far less talented actors. Gassman, admittedly, is a good stage actor but on the screen his personality is dull. He fails dismally to interest us in this story of a Roman scoundrel with a lurid past (he has been kept by a man who has now left him an enormous fortune—but the man's family are threatening a scandal) who marries a decent girl (played by Annette Stroyberg, the least talented of Vadim's wives). It is a terrifying experience to find the director of *Open City* shooting a whole dialogue sequence between two people against a painted beach backdrop. I would never say that Rossellini is a *bad* director: just that as an artist he is not a serious person. He is also obviously the laziest director in the world. Let's hope that he regains some of his former lustre this autumn when he goes to Greece to direct Magnani again.

While young directors are tackling Sicilian problems in the best traditions of Italian film realism (one new film, seen in the Venice Festival out of competition, is *Un Uomo da bruciare* which shows a young Sicilian revolting against the Mafia) the older directors of the commercial cinema are using Sicily as background for sure box-office successes. One such film promises to be *Il Mafiosi* which, with Sordi's international reputation soaring, already has an English title *Journey to America*. It is the story of a Sicilian who takes his family on holiday from Milan to his home village. There he becomes involved with the Mafia, who send him to Chicago to murder somebody. The film is directed by Lattuada and co-stars Sordi with Norma Benguel, the Brazilian actress who starred in the Cannes Palme D'Or film *O Pagador de Promessas* (*The Given Word*). Locations for *Il Mafioso* have been shot in the USA.

Cuba

Fidel's flicks by Peter Baker

I am not sure how I would react if, on returning to London by a BOAC flight from South America, all the British passengers were to get to their feet spontaneously at the first glimpse of the English coastline, link hands, and sing 'Land of Hope and Glory'. I do know how I reacted as the Czech plane—a Bristol Britannia, incidentally—taking me from Prague to Havana swept over the Cuban coastline and some forty Cubans returning from Europe got to their feet spontaneously to sing one of the revolutionary songs. I felt all soppy and sentimental.

I had met Alfredo Guevara, the director of ICAIC (that means the Cuban Institute of Art and of the Film Industry) at the Sestri Levante festival of Latin American films in Italy earlier this year. I said I liked the new Cuban pictures. He said, come and see us make them. It all seemed very simple. I had not reckoned with the Cuban excess of enthusiasm and limitation of organisational know-how.

Several weeks later I received a cable from Giraldo Mazola, the director of ICAP (that means the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the People) inviting me to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the revolution, which was less than a week ahead. As there are only two flights a week between Europe and Cuba, I soon realised that I had had the celebrations. When I finally arrived I thought I had had the next issue of *films and filming* and the Venice Festival as well. Four hundred guests (who did have the celebrations) were sitting ready-packed in the airport departure lounge and the hotel lobbies waiting hopefully for a seat home. I was given a book of meal coupons that would last me a month and taken to an overflowing INIT (that means the National Institute for Tourism) hotel which I believe is the lost property of Conrad Hilton. I had lunch with a dark skinned gentleman (bean soup, over cooked spaghetti and a piece of mango) and listened intently to all the complexities of his country's economic and political problems. Cuba, I thought, was in a worse state than I had been led to believe. It was only as we were leaving the dining room that I realised he was a Jamaican, studying the path his country should go now it has independence.

I found the institute of friendship people in a disused flower shop in which a stack of Fidel Castro speeches (translated into umpteen languages) were cooling off in the refrigerator. I explained that I wanted to study the Cuban film industry, see something of the island, and get home before I had forgotten what home is like. From that moment on I might have been Alice in a Caribbean Wonderland.

The hotel itself had been worked for five years, but not maintained. It was like some prehistoric monster in its death agonies. Fixtures came away in the hand. Bath towels tore like paper with age. Festoons of lights had gone out one by one as irreplaceable bulbs came to the end of their useful life. Vacuum cleaners wheezed as they were trundled daily across acres of wearing carpet. The sun had faded papers and blistered paint.

Outside, weeds are breaking up the paving stones and along almost every road are the decomposing hulks of great, once chromium bright American cars, abandoned for want of spare parts. The night clubs stay open and empty, without vice but with liquor more expensive than anywhere in the world.

I was bundled into a 'bus, I thought to watch a Czech film unit at work, but it transpired we were to be shown a new village built for the fishermen. A Cuban told me: 'They have never had homes before. Now they have them they sit in them and don't go out to fish. What do you think we should do?' I wanted to laugh: the situation had that touch of tragedy that made it comic. I was about to say 'Wait', but I realised that this is the one thing the new Cuba cannot do. It is impatient to get things done—to overcome the frightening level of illiteracy, to learn new agricultural and technical skills, and to build (literally with their hands) sufficient new houses for the people.

In such an environment, cinema is bound to seem a secondary consideration. Two Russians had arrived with a consignment of Soviet tractors. There was almost a sense of disappointment when it was discovered they were not agricultural engineers, but film men.

On the bookstalls I found a new issue of *Cine Cubano*, an excellent magazine controlled by Alfredo Guevara's Institute, but in practice edited by the Italian theorist Eduardo Manet, a Cuban film historian Hector Garcia Mesa (director of the Cinemateca de Cuba), and a new and an experienced film director, Tomas Gutierrez Alea (who made the first feature in the new Cuba, *Historias de la Revolucion*) and Julio Garcia Espinosa (whose *El Joven Rebelde* well deserved its Karlovy Vary festival award).

I found the make up room for the Czech co-production by accident when I was looking in the hotel basement for a shop where I was told I could buy cigars. An English-speaking Englishman trying to understand Spanish-speaking Czechs explain the complexities of film technique in an atmosphere akin to my favourite turkish bath strains the weak fabric of human language to breaking point. So we found a common meeting point in rum-and-lime in the air conditioned American bar (sorry, I mean International bar) gaily decorated with a panorama of Soviet and Cuban flags, and with tables littered with uncollected Coca-Cola bottles (used for storing nothing more harmful than old fashioned fizzy lemon).

Filming in Cuba I knew was stimulated by the social changes of revolution, by the lack of studio space which forced the film-makers into the villages and countryside, and by the experienced guidance of sympathisers from other countries, notably, Italy, France, Mexico, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. And Peter Brooks, who visited here two years ago, seems to have established in the minds of many Cubans an idea that the whole of Britain is behind them: how far, I wonder?

I was just beginning to like the flavour of rum and Cuban Coca-Cola when a lady from the flowershop told me she had asked the Minister of Transport to get me on a plane back to Europe the next day. It would have been fatal to explain that she had the priorities mixed up, that I wanted films first, flights later. So I decided to plunge myself into a night of Havana cinemagoing.

Most of the cinemas are small and hot, some are open air, and a few have the luxury of adequate air conditioning. One double bill offered a Chinese star, Li Pai Wang, with an old Betty Grable musical in support. William Holden in *Picnic* was supporting a neat study in anti-Americanism by the Russians. Rita Hayworth, James Cagney, Cary Grant and Jeffrey Hunter all had their names boldly displayed on the posters. I began to feel quite at home. There were Italian films, Mexican films, American films all showing in cinemas with such odd names as Astor, Florida, Los Angeles, Radio Centre, and Universal. But I couldn't find a new Cuban feature.

The Radio Centre was showing the Soviet 'cinerama', which contains shots of the Moscow Metro in the rush hour and Ulanova doing her stuff at the Bolshoi. The ICAIC cinema had an experimental programme of German films and I saw that the Cinemateca de Cuba had a forthcoming season on surrealism in the cinema—an American programme including of all people, Abbot and Costello; a French programme angled on Cocteau; a British programme which billed *The Hounds of the Baskervilles;* and a Mexican programme which, not surprisingly, is all Buñuel.

I finally settled for a collection of Cuban documentaries at the Rex which, allowing for my hazy Spanish, appeared to be well done. The propaganda content had a subtlety surprising for a new cinema and a new country.

The Minister of Transport who brow-beat the Czechs to find me a seat on the plane for Europe the next morning was a remarkably efficient young man of about twenty. Unlike many of his colleagues he did not wear a Fidel beard.

But like everyone I met in Cuba, he had a quiet confidence in the justice of the new order, an almost neurotic distrust of 'the Yankee imperialists' (even the men's room at the hotel had a soldier on permanent guard, though for what reason I was never quite certain), and a frightening conviction in his voice when he spoke of '*patria o muerte*' (my country or my life).

As I flew home to Britain, I didn't want to stand and sing 'Land of Hope and Glory'. But I had an odd urge to shout: 'Cuba for the Cubans'. Whatever political system they think is best.

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● *With Lana Andre and Richard Arlen in Wesley Ruggles' 'College Humour' (1933)*

● *With Akim Tamiroff in Frank Tuttle's 'Here is My Heart' (1934)*

Records

Hollywood's

When I last saw Bing Crosby he was adjusting his toupee for a filmed television interview and asking his ebullient partner Bob Hope if the TV shooting (it was almost snooping) during the filming in Britain of *The Road to Hong Kong* was not being overdone. I realised then the essential difference between the two. Crosby can't help being professional; Hope's professionalism springs from a careful calculation of every move.

Yet Crosby is no Olivier when it comes to acting; no Valentino when it comes to sex-appeal; no Astaire when it comes to dancing; and certainly no Hope with comedy. Even as a singer he has not carried the label 'the old groaner' for all these years without justification: he could never handle a ballad like McCormack, he has never had the sheer power of Lanza, and even in his youth he could never waggle his hips like Presley.

Why, then, has Crosby been at the top for thirty years, made more films and sold more records than any other singer, and been idolised as much within the profession as by the public? Basically it is a simple honesty that is common to all great artists whether they act in Shakespeare, write like Hemingway, sing in grand opera—or croon *With Every Breath I Take* with such ease and assurance that it becomes a classic in its own right. Without such honesty Crosby would never have captured the following of some six generations of teenagers and held the attention of most of them when they reached maturity.

The recent issue of fifteen long playing records under the generative title of *Bing's Hollywood* has provided a unique opportunity to evaluate his formidable contribution to popular culture. The records cover excerpts from forty-two of his films (I think he has made 53 but I stand to be proved wrong) and the whole anthology comprises more than 180 songs.

Crosby has sung music by Gershwin, Porter, Cahn, Van Heusen, Carmichael, Berlin and Rodgers, with Franz Schubert and Johanne Strauss thrown in. He has been directed by Seaton, Milestone, Capra, Wilder, McCarey, Schertzinger and Butler. He has acted with W C Fields, Ethel Merman, Ida Lupino, Anthony Quinn, Beatrice Lillie, Barry Fitzgerald, Ingrid Bergman, Joan Fontaine, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Charles Coburn, Franchot Tone, Ethel Barrymore, Grace Kelly, William Holden, Zizi Jeanmaire and his regular 'gang' of Fred Astaire, Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour.

He has been influenced by none of them. Berlin's music or Porter's music sounds as though it was written fresh for Crosby. Capra's *Here Comes the Groom* and *Riding High* were singularly poor Capra but excellent Crosby. And his brushes with Fitzgerald (*Going My Way*) or Hardwicke (*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*) made him neither a better actor nor a worse singer.

Listening to a progression of Crosby, from 1934 to 1956, one cannot but be impressed by the man's refusal to change. He is without doubt the world's most successful square. The voice has matured, so that by the late 'forties he was at his best; but as the Crosby voice improved, the music and lyrics he sang became worse. By the early 'fifties he was singing stuff that less secure artists would have rejected out of hand as a positive menace to their careers. I find little of merit, for instance, in the Van Heusen-Burke scores for *Road to Bali* and *Little Boy Lost* or the Warren-Robin score for *Just for You*. Even Robert Lewis' 1956 re-make of *Anything Goes* (music by Cole Porter) was no devastating improvement on the Lewis Milestone version of 1936. The additional Van Heusen-Cahn material added little except sheer footage.

Some people may argue that Crosby was born with a golden record in his mouth. In 1925, at the age of 21, he was helped by a college friend's sister to get singing engagements which brought him to the attention of Paul Whiteman. For five years he was one of The Rhythm Boys, making his film debut in Whiteman's *The King of Jazz* (1930). Whiteman went East, Crosby stayed West and made shorts for Mack Sennett (who didn't?), recorded his first Brunswick disc and ghosted the singer in Paramount's *Confessions of a Co-Ed*. Overnight he was a singing star; and

● *With Mitzi Gaynor in Robert Lewis' 'Anything Goes' (1956)*

● *With Bob Hope in Victor Schertzinger's 'Road to Zanzibar' (1941)*

● *With Barry Fitzgerald in Leo McCarey's 'Going My Way' (1944)*

● *In trouble in Billy Wilder's 'Emperor Waltz' (1948)*

Bing

Bing Crosby at fifty-eight has sung more songs, made more records, and starred in more films than any 'pop' singer of the last three decades. Highlights of his contribution to the cinema have been issued in a 15-disc anthology, reviewed here by Rod Hume

by the summer of 1932 the name Bing Crosby was a household word. Months later he was starred by Paramount in *College Humour*.

The recorded anthology begins with *Here in My Heart* (1934) in which he sung that classic 'croon' number *With Every Breath I Take*. It parades almost every song Crosby has sung in films since then. If you're old enough to have started cinemagoing in the mid-'thirties you will remember *Empty Saddles*, *Pennies from Heaven*, *Sweet Leilani*, *The Moon Got in My Eyes*, *The Funny Old Hills*, *Sing a Song of Sunbeams*, *An Apple for the Teacher*, *If I Had My Way*, *I Haven't Time to be a Millionaire* or *Meet the Sun Halfway*. If you didn't, then you can enjoy making discoveries now. Since the Second World War the humanity has gone out of pop music.

I would imagine that the most popular disc from the anthology will be *Holiday Inn*, which contains all twelve Berlin numbers from the 1942 musical that gave the world a new Christmas 'carol' with *White Christmas*. One of my own favourites is the disc containing the *Road to Morocco* numbers wholly because I have always enjoyed the corn of the Road films like some secret vice.

The anthology is the largest ever compiled for a singer, including the world's great concert artists. I hope it marks a more serious approach to the cinema on the part of the record companies. There are far too many discs of trivial music from second rate films.

Bing's Hollywood succeeds largely because the majority of the numbers are original tracks from the films and not revised concert versions recorded several years later. There is a technical limitation as a result. Generally the transfers have been done well and I found the best reproduction is obtained playing through an amplifier at the characteristic recommended for 78's. But there are a few unaccountable bad patches—an almost complete lack of treble in some of the *Holiday Inn* numbers. And some roughness at times suggests that the transfers have been made from 78's which were themselves dubbings from optical film tracks. However, only people using very sensitive equipment (and with very sensitive ears) are likely to be irritated by any technical blemishes.

The sleeves each carry full colour reproductions of oil paintings of Bing from his many films, and the notes on each sleeve admirably summarise the casting and technical credits together with the story line of each film. However, the un-named writer is at times a little flamboyant and superficial in his biographical sketches. But it is the music that counts; and anyone who enjoys hearing Bing sing will start collecting the series, although at a time when most re-issues appear on the inexpensive Ace of Hearts label 35*s* 9*d* may be considered a high price to pay per dozen numbers.

The records in the series are:
Bing 1—Songs from 'Here is My Heart', 'Mississippi', 'Two for Tonight' and 'The Big Broadcast of 1936'
Bing 2—Songs from 'Anything Goes', 'Rhythm on the Range' and 'Pennies from Heaven'
Bing 3—Songs from 'Waikiki Wedding', 'Double or Nothing' and 'Sing You Sinners'
Bing 4—Songs from 'Doctor Rhythm', 'Paris Honeymoon' and 'East Side of Heaven'
Bing 5—Songs from 'The Star Maker', 'Road to Singapore' and 'If I had My Way'
Bing 6—Songs from 'Rhythm on the River', 'Road to Zanzibar', and 'Birth of the Blues'
Bing 7—Songs from 'Holiday Inn'
Bing 8—Songs from 'Road to Morocco', 'Dixie' and 'Going My Way'
Bing 9—Songs from 'Here Come the Waves', 'The Bells of St Mary's' and 'Road to Utopia'
Bing 10—Songs from 'Blue Skies' and 'Out of This World'
Bing 11—Songs from 'Welcome Stranger', 'Road to Rio', 'The Emperor Waltz' and 'Variety Girl'
Bing 12—Songs from 'A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court', 'Top O' the Morning' and 'Riding High'
Bing 13—Songs from 'Mr Music' and 'Here Comes the Groom'
Bing 14—Songs from 'Just for You' and 'Road to Bali'
Bing 15—Songs from 'Little Boy Lost', 'The Country Girl' and 'Anything Goes'
Issued by Brunswick at 35*s* 9*d* each. Mono only.

FAR OUT FORMS

Mario Nascimbene has a never-ending supply of melodies and it is extraordinary to find him experimenting with electronic and other 'far out' musical forms. He has done so in his score for the Italian-made, American-financed *Barabbas*. I give him credit for trying to get away from the sloppy sentimentality of the kind of music usually used in religious sagas.

Unfortunately the sounds, for the most part, remind me of the worst kind of si-fic pictures. It is music for a supersonic Jesus. The record's promoters (Pye 12*in* LP NPL 28020 34*s*) have their doubts about audience reaction, I suspect, because at the end of the disc a loud voiced gentleman gives a pep talk on the ingenuity with which Nascimbene's effects were recorded.

My guess is that in years to come people will still remember the reproductions of the work of great artists, which form the back of the sleeve, and will have forgotten the *Barabbas* music.

A British picture that surprised the critics by its quality was *Some People*. The music is a pleasant surprise, too. (Pye 45 rpm NEP 24158 12*s*) Six brisk tunes for jeanagers nicely put over by Valerie Mountain and the Eagles.

RH

LETTERS

write to 7 Hobart Place, London SW1

The narrow-mindedness in D S Allen's letter (September) is just what troubles the cinema today. I am just sixteen, so I know how teenagers feel. Do any of the reputable 'x' films show that vice, prostitution, and crime, etcetera, really pay in the end? Surely it is a good thing to let teenagers see these films. By the age of 18 or 20 it is too late. I have seen a number of 'x' films and I have learnt more from them than from any book.

I would welcome the introduction of another certificate such as an 'AA' which would mean that children under 12 were not permitted to see it; and up to 16 or 18 only with an adult. For really unsuitable films, *Lolita* for example, an 'xx' could be given barring under 18's from viewing it.

I am not using the excuse of the 'art' film. Few teenagers (that is under 16) are interested in them. With more and more 'x' films being made to raise the age to 18 would be financially disastrous. Between the ages of 15 and 20 one goes to the cinema more than any other age.

JANE NICOLL
18 Birkwood-road, Petts Wood

Good support

The Traitors was an unpublicised low-budget production that has all the earmarks of a minor masterpiece. The inevitable clichés of the raincoat thriller are completely revitalised by the natural, confident approach of director and actors.

An object lesson in how to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, and I hope it gets the recognition it deserves. C YOUNG
14 Butterfield Close, Manor Farm
Westbury on Trym, Bristol

● *films and filming gave it the thumbs-down! Were we wrong?—Editor*

Bad ads

It is heartening to hear that such a distinguished critic as Roger Manvell 'cannot conceive a time when there is no cinema', (In Camera, September). However, one of the things that still does a great deal to keep audiences away is surely the low standard of film advertising. The lurid posters and ill-constructed trailers often lead the innocent filmgoer to expect a film to be much worse than it actually is.

However, until the whole subject of film advertising is taken seriously in Britain, audiences will continue to stay away from the cinemas which will inevitably close down. F J STEWARD
219 Valley road, Ipswich

Big sleep

In the August issue, Andrew Sarris states that in *The Big Sleep*, 'Hawks himself never figured out why one of the eight murders had been committed. During the last stages of production, the director called Raymond Chandler . . . but the mystery writer was unable to provide an adequate solution.'

This rather conflicts with evidence given in the book *Raymond Chandler Speaking*, where on page 221 there is a letter from Raymond Chandler to his London publisher, dated March 21, 1949: 'I remember several years ago when Howard Hawks was making *The Big Sleep*, the movie, he and Bogart got into an argument as to whether one of the characters was murdered or committed suicide. They sent me a wire asking me, and dammit I didn't know either . . .'

The author also states that *The Ransom of Red Chief* was cut from *O'Henry's Full House*. In fact I saw this film in Chicago soon after it was released and this sequence was definitely included. While I cannot remember the theatre, my impression is that it was a second-run neighbourhood house and so presumably quite a number of people, in the US at least, did see this sequence. GEORGE ZYGMUND
Pipers Croft, Newtown, Chesham, Bucks

The house

Reviewing the San Sebastian Festival (August) J F Aranda states: *'Het Huis*, commissioned by the Dutch Shell is a conventional, but well made, documentary'. *Het Huis* was neither commissioned nor is it a documentary. In fact it is a highly personal short feature (running time: 30 mins) financed almost solely by an original, sensitive Dutch film-maker, Louis A van Gasteren.

It has been shown at several Festivals and caused something of a critical controversy at its screening at Edinburgh last year. When Gordon Gow (November 1961 issue) discussed the principle of showing events in 'a psychological rather than chronological order' he described *The House* as 'a brilliant, fragmentary half-hour film . . .', bracketing it with *Citizen Kane* and *Hiroshima Mon Amour*.

JAMES M CRAWFORD, LT
6 Company RASC (GW)
British Forces Post Office 44

● *Sr Aranda had confused the film with 'Hold Back the Sea', as the titles were transferred on the Jury list. He, and films and filming, apologise for the confusion.—Editor*

Changed names

Can anybody please tell me why such films which while they were in production were to be called *A Change of Heart* and *Act of Mercy* had these apt titles changed to such ridiculous ones as *Two and Two Make Six* (which suggests a film of school life) and *Guns of Darkness* (which ought to be the title of a Western)?

Why is it also always necessary to change the title of most books when making them into films? They are usually simple and self-explanatory, such as *The 4.50 from Paddington* and *Pioneer, Go Home*. But the producers, apart from tearing the stories to shreds, alter the titles as well. It may be that they do not wish the audience to realise from what book the story was taken, to avoid odious comparison. P BLOOD
'Broxholme', The Park, Muyton, Liverpool

next month

A blank cheque for the real thing *Darryl F Zanuck tells how he filmed Cornelius Ryan's book, 'The Longest Day'*

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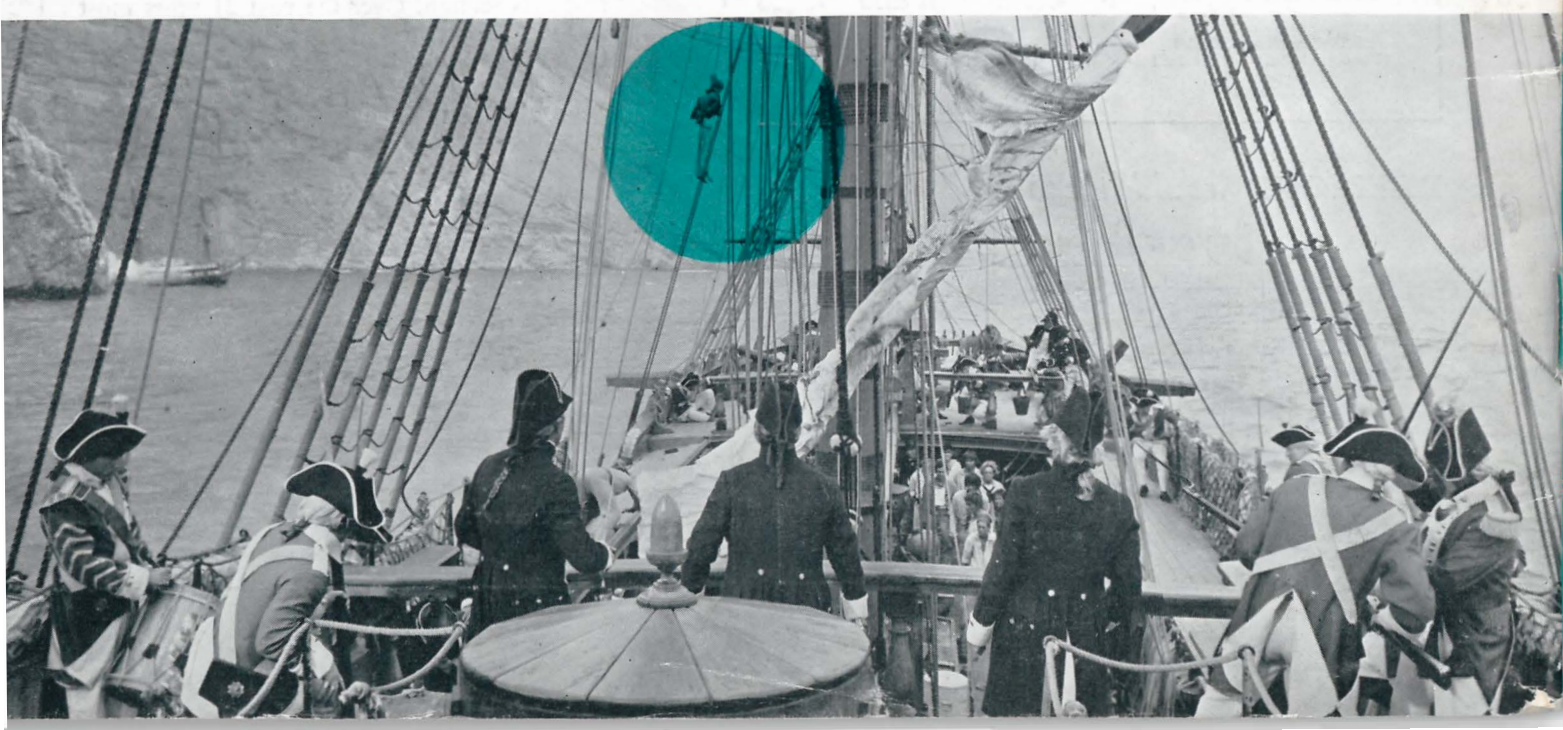
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